A Triple Paradox:

Affixed to a

COUNTER-MURE

Raiſed againſt the Furious Batteries of

Reſtraint, Slander and Poverty,

The three Grand Engines

OF

The *World*, the *Fleſh* and the *Devil.*

By Major *GEORGE WITHER*,

Who, now beleagured by their Forces, throws out unto them this DEFIANCE.

The ſaid *PARADOX* maintains theſe Particulars.

That Confinement *is more ſafe than* Liberty,
Slander *more advantageous than* Praiſe,
Poverty *more profitable than* Riches.

Nuſquam, non poteſt eſſe virtuti locus. Seneca.

LONDON,
Printed for the Author. 1661.

UMI

UMI

The Author, *to all those who have relieved him in his* Beleaguerement.

IT is a more Blessed thing to *Give*, than to *Receive*; Therefore, having hitherto been a *Receiver* only, I am now desirous to be a *Giver* also, though it be but of a *Mite*, or of a *Cup of cold Water*; For, we are not to expect Benedictions or Acceprations, strictly answerable to the quantity or quality of our *Gifts* considered in themselves, but according to our *Purposes* and *Abilities*; which incourages me to send you a handful of such *Fruit* as grows upon my *WITHERD-Tree*, now almost past bearing, that if you find it as pleasant and as wholsome, as I conceived it to be, you having therewith refreshed your selves, may if you please, pick out some of the *Kernels*, and by sowing and replanting them in your *Orchards*, preserve the *kinde* for future use, when my Tree is rotten.

I make not tender of this *Diminutive Present*, by way of *Retribution*; For, GOD is your reward: but to be a testimonial of my Gratitude, and of my willingness, to have done more, if I had been able; or rather, that it may be a memorial of *GODS Mercy* to me vouchsafed by your hands when I was deserted of the *World*, which ought never to be by me forgotten: For, I confess, I have thereby lived to produce *this*, and whatsoever I shall do hereafter in discharge of my duty, and had else, ere this day perished from the Earth, for ought I know to the contrary, though in my greatest wants and uncertainty of *Supplies* I was always as far from a despairing *Distrust*, as if I had then possessed a Vault filled with hidden Treasures, which no man could take from me: And (though I am yet in no more certainty in respect of *External Supplies*) GOD preserves in me the same confidence, and I believe he will always preserve it in me.

This, is so great, and so extraordinary a *Mercy*, considering the many terrors, distrusts & necessities, wherewith many thousands of better men are daily exercised & proved, that I conceive my self obliged in conscience, openly to acknowledge it, both to glorifie him who vouchsafes it, and to confirm in my self and other men, our Christian hopes, by delaring what GOD hath

done for my ſoul, who have nothing in my ſelf to deſerve it, but what is of his gift, and who have much more of my own, which rather deſerves the contrary. I am, and I hope ſhall ever be ſo far from being aſhamed of my preſervation by meer *Charity*, that I do eſteem it a greater honour & happineſs, than to have the moſt plentiful ſubſiſtance which the world can confer upon me by a conſtant *Revenue*, with an eminent dignitary annexed: For I have ſeen the beſt Proviſions of that kind, not only to fail but to bring their Poſſeſſors alſo to be worſe than nothing.

I had ſuperſcribed your *Names* (or hereto added a Catalogue of them:) but many of you are perſonally unknown, and, the reſt having diſcovered themſelves unto me, for our mutual comfort and converſation only (without any deſire that notice might be taken by other men of what hath been communicated, and paſſed between them and me) I do forbear making your Names publick, for that and other conſiderable reſpects. You are my friends by the ſureſt ſide: For you were not made mine by my induſtry, merit, ſolicitation, or in reſpect of any carnal Relations, but meerly by GODS Mediation who inclined your hearts to that voluntary compaſſion, whereof I had fruit in due ſeaſon, ſufficient to preſerve me, without ſordid want or dejection, in that condition wherein I am likely to be continued to fit me for that ſervice, which I have yet to do; and I am confident that he who made you my *Friends*, will ſo keep you; and make me thankful to him and you, whilſt we live in this world. Your Acceptation I doubt not of, nor of aſſiſtance by your prayers to the end of my *Pilgrimage*: For, though ſome of us may circumſtantially differ in our *Judgements*, we are one in him and with him, in his *Eſſential Truth*, and in that love which knits all the *Saints* into one bleſſed and everlaſting *Communion*. I am

Your humble Beadſman,

GEORGE WITHER.

A Triple Paradox;

Wherein are aſſerted, theſe particulars, that (TY; *IMPRISONMENT, is more ſafe than* LIBER-SLANDER, *more advantageous than* PRAISE; *POVERTY, more profitable than* RICHES.

For an INTRODUCTION, *the* AUTHOR *ſlings this Expreſs to the* WORLD.

A *Parlie*, unto thee diſdainful WORLD,
I ſound; and have to thee this *Paper* hurl'd.
Yet, neither for a *Treaty* or *Compliance*,
But, rather, ſtill, to bid to thee *Defiance*;
For, what thou *wer't*, thou *art*; and I yet am
And will be, whilſt I live, to thee the ſame.
Thou art become the *Miſtreſs of the Field*;
Haſt me beleaguer'd, ſummond me to yield
My *Fortreſs*, and thou ſo proceedeſt on,
As if thou wert aſſur'd, it ſhould be wonn:
But, thereon thou perhaps, mayſt yet attend
As long as did th' *Infanta* for *Oſtend*;
And as ſhe nothing had at laſt but Stones,
Get nothing but dead fleſh, and rotten bones.
I ſee thine inſolence, and every day
Hear what thy favourites are pleas'd to ſay,
How they extol thy *Power*, how they debaſe
My ſuccours, and my helpers would diſgrace.

I well observe, thou round begirt me hast;
That, having all my *Outworks* quite laid waste,
Thou, to compleat a *Conquest*, dost begin
A fierce assault to ruine all *within*.
That, to prevent the sending of supplies, (lies.
Thou fright'st my friends with slanders and with
My *Accusatrix* too, become thou art;
And, justly (I acknowledge) in some part,
But, not in all: for, chiefly, thy *temptations*
Inducements were to those prevarications
Whereby, my Talents were sometime abus'd:
Though therefore, I seem worthily reduc'd
To what I am; thou undeservedly
Hast me pursued with malignity;
Because the love which I once bore to thee
Was more, than thou deservedst it should be;
Thou most injuriously requited hast
That love, which in my youth on thee I plac't;
For, though I never totally was thine, (mine:
Thou had'st (when least) more of me then was
And, him, of his right, to whom all was due
I robbed then, thy service to pursue.
But, he, now gives me grace, thy wiles to hate,
And to observe them ere it is too late,
That what thou by thy falshoods dost intend,
Shall cross thine own *Designments* in the end.
Thou, having into many errors run me,
Thought'st by undoing me, to have undone me,
But art deceiv'd: for, that which thou hast done
Hath brought me to the knowledge of that *Stone*,
Which turneth dross to gold; and from offences
Instructs me to extract those *Quintessences*,
Which will preserve my *Freedome* in all places,
Supply all *Wants*; Convert all my *Disgraces*

To

To honours; and in every estate,
With all things needful, me accommodate.
The *Devil* by thine aid, hath long time sought
How, he his ends upon me might have wrought;
But, neither *Thou* nor *He*, nor both conjoyn'd,
Had power to bring to pass what was design'd,
Untill the FLESH, my *Dalilah*, you got
To be a third Associate in the Plot;
And then, both to her damage, and to mine
You, such progression made in your design,
That by deluding her, you soon prevail'd,
In that, whereof you otherwise had fail'd;
So, by her *Frailty*, more than by your *Power*,
(I, being in your clutches at this hour)
Am openly exposed (in some sort)
Like *Sampson* for a while, to make you sport;
But, stretched your malignity so far
That your own *Actings*, your own works will mar:
For, though my *Dalilah* your Vassal be,
And you by her means have surprized me,
Your Cords and Chains will off again be flung,
So that, we shall redeemed be ere long
From our *Captivities*, and in conclusion
Your own contrivements will be your confusion.
When thou pretendedst kindnesses to me
(And by them, didst intend to ruine me)
Thou gav'st me then, one of *Pandora*'s Boxes,
Which, I return thee full of *Paradoxes*
That shall uncharm thy *Witchcrafts*, and destroy
Those *Gins* which thou against me dost employ:
For, if thou open it, (as it is fed
Prometheus opened what shee's fabuled
To have bestow'd on him) from thence will flow
Those *Truths*, which will thy falshoods overthrow,

And make ſome who admire them, to contemn
Thoſe *Juglings* wherewithall thou fooleſt them:
As likewiſe all thoſe Bugbear-Tyrannies,
Which thy oppreſſing-Inſtruments deviſe
To fright us from our duties, and adhere
To thy allurements, out of love or fear.
To batter down my petty ſingle *Sconce*,
Thy three great'ſt *Engines* thou haſt rais'd at once,
And ſo ſurrounded me within my *Fort*,
That, I have ſcarce one little Sally-port
Whereby I may have egreſs to offend
My *Foes*, or to give ingreſs to a friend.
Thy *Ragged Regiment* of *POVERTY*, (*TY*,
(And they which by *RESTRAINT* of *LIBER*-
Commanded are) encloſe me ſo about
With *double Trenches*, that, here can to nought
For my Relief, admittance now be given,
Except it comes immediately from Heaven:
Moreover, at the *four Winds*, raiſed high,
Are four *Mounts*, whereupon thy *Batteries* lie
So diligently man'd by Major SLANDER
(An old and well experienced Commander
In ſuch like ſervices) that, ſeveral wayes
His great Artillery upon me playes.
At me perpetually his tongue-ſhot flies,
And his whole *Culverings* charg'd full with *Lies*,
Send poyſoned Bullets, which I often hear,
Making loud cracks, or whizzing by mine ear.
But, I, at laſt, ſhall rout all this *Brigade*,
Quite fruſtrate thoſe attempts which thou haſt (made
And raiſe again thy *ſeige*, or do as well
By dying nobly in my *Citadel*,
And, that it will to thee (when batter'd down)
Prove like the Houſe by *Sampſon* overthrown.

Then,

Then, thoſe things, plainly will to thee appear,
Which thou at preſent, wilt not ſee nor hear;
And I ſhall be the ſame to thee and thine,
Which thou haſt lately been to me and mine;
For, then, my *Ghoſt*, arrayed in white ſheets
Shall haunt thy houſes, walk about thy ſtreets,
And fright thee day and night with repetition
Of what is haſting on, for thy perdition,
And will deſcend upon thee at thoſe times
Wherein thou fill'ſt the meaſure of thy Crimes.
Mean while, to comfort others, and prevent
The tediouſneſs of my *Beleaguerement*,
Ile draw a Map, wherein Ile ſo expreſs
The vanity of thy maliciouſneſs,
That, they who liſt ſhall know how much I ſlight
Thy *Triple-Forces*, and contemn thy ſpight;
And I to thee, their weakneſſes apart
Will ſo declare, that, unleſs blind thou art
Thou ſhalt perceive, I cannot be deſtroy'd,
By thoſe whom thou againſt me haſt employ'd
Although in one united: for, theſe three
SLANDER, IMPRISONMENT and POVERTY,
To fall upon me, all at once began
Before, thou didſt repute me for a *Man*;
And though they charge me all at once agen,
Grown weaker by *old age*, than I was then,
My *Helper* is the ſame; and ſuffring long (ſtrong.
Hath by his Grace, now made my power more
I know thy pride this *Confidence* contemns:
For, *faith* and *hope*, are now thought but the dreams
Of thoſe men, whom thou doſt *Phanaticks* call:
But, whatſoev'r thou thinkſt, proceed I ſhall.
And, if thou heedſt what follows, thou ſhalt hear
How little, either *thee*, or thine I fear.

With

With that part of thy *Forces* I'le begin
Which, with the firſt *Trench* hath now ſhut me in.
Thou knowſt, what *outwardly*, thou haſt bereſt;
Now, thou ſhalt know, what is within me leſt
But, never ſhalt attain to apprehend
How far my hidden ſtore-houſe doth extend.

Confinement *is more advantageous than* Liberty.

RESTRAINT, which is an Engine, right or wrong,
Made uſe of, (firſt, or laſt, ſhort time or long)
By moſt Oppreſſors, hath been oft my lot;
And, at this preſent, I eſcape it not:
For, (though not in the ordinary way
It ſeemeth now inflicted) I might ſay,
I am impriſoned, and ſo confin'd
That, I am no way free, except in *mind*.
Of moſt enjoyments I am quite depriv'd
Which from external things may be deriv'd,
Yet thereby not undone; for I poſſeſs
My whole eſſential Freedome neretheleſs.
My toyes are loſt, but by their deprivations
I furniſh'd am with real conſolations, (ſhows
Which, though they to the world-ward make no
Yield ſweeter comforts than the things I loſe,
And make my hidden Freedoms to be more
Than thoſe the world voughſafed heretofore:
For, to her *Freedoms*, when reſpect I gave
I was then only free to be a ſlave,
Whereas, this, doth from nothing me reſtrain,
Which, to true Liberty, doth appertain.

That,

That, which gives moſt content to fleſh and blood
I finde to be the baſeſt ſervitude;
And that we nothing have whereof to boaſt
Till what the world calls *Liberty* is loſt.
What *Freedom* want I, ſave what being had
makes many *Free-men* ſlaves, and wiſe men mad?
None, have upon themſelves, and others, brought
More plagues than they have done, who would be
The freeſt men: for *Freedoms* miſ-imploy'd (thought
Have lately all our Liberties deſtroy'd;
And, moſt, whom we much reverence as our betters
Are but our fellow-ſlaves in golden fetters.
What *Liberty* had I, whereof to vaunt
By thoſe Infranchiſements I ſeem to want?
I was at Liberty to rowle in duſt,
To proſecute my fancies and my luſt;
And therein joy'd, when I could walk abroad;
But, now, I finde the *Services* of GOD
Are *Perfectſt Freedom.* That, I am debarr'd
Of nothing, which deſerveth my regard;
And, that the *Liberty* I did poſſeſs,
Was not true *Freedom*, but *Licentiouſneſs*;
At which experiment I am arriv'd,
By loſing that whereof I am depriv'd.

This (though fore-ſeen it was) to me befell
Before I for it was prepared well,
And, I confeſs, at firſt it made a change
Within me, and without, that ſeemed ſtrange:
But, not long after, at the ſecond ſight, (right;
That, which appear'd the *wrong-ſide*, prov'd the
And I am well contented therewithall:
For, I could ſee GODS *Mercies* through the wall;
Diſcern'd, when inwardly, I turn'd mine eyes,
Much more of Heaven, than when I ſaw the skies.

And, that, from very little I was barr'd,
Which I have reason greatly to regard.
What can I see abroad, which hath not been
By me before, almost to loathing seen,
Or, heard not so describ'd, that being shown
It will not seem a thing already known?
Both Changes and Rechanges I have view'd;
Seen *new things* old become, old things renew'd;
Princes petitioning disdainful Grooms
Great *Kings* dethron'd, & Peasants in their rooms;
Laws out-law'd, *Out-Laws* raised to be Judges
Of Laws, Lives, Goods, and of our Priviledges,
By Law and Conscience; Loyaltie made Treason,
And Treason Loyaltie; Non-sense for Reason
Allow'd, and Reason thought irrational:
Yea, *Meteors* I have seen rise, and Stars fall;
Foundations that immoveable appear'd
Thrown down, and Castles in the Air uprear'd.
I have seen *Heads* and *Feet* exchange their places,
Wealth make men poor, and honour bring dis-
Beauties, which ravished beholders eyes (graces;
Wax more deformed than *Anatomies*,
Or, no more lovely to be lookt upon,
Than *Rawridge*, Mumble-crust, or *Bloody-bone*,
But, truth to say, they who most lovely be,
Now, no more pleasureful appear to me
Than *Pictures*, nor so much as ugly faces
Whose hearts are beautifi'd with inward graces,
Although to *Beauty* very few were more
A Servant, than I have been heretofore,
And if that please not, which I once lik'd best,
What pleasure is there to behold the rest?
That, at this present, and all other sights
Afford so little which my heart delights,

That,

That, all the earth, and one poor little room
Are ſo equivalent to me become,
That I know nothing any other where
More to be priz'd than my enjoyments here;
And, that which makes me ſo indifferent
Nor melancholy is, nor diſcontent.
Confinement, in a houſe of ſtrength doth dwell,
A homely, and ſometimes a naſty Cell,
In furnitures, and in attendance poor,
A *Cerberus* lies alwayes at the door
Fawning a little, when we entring are
But ever ſnarls while we continue there:
Yet, I ſo quickly had found out his diet,
That, I knew either how to keep him quiet,
Or order ſo my ſelf, that when I pleaſe,
I can lye down and ſleep in *LITTLE-EASE*;
Enlarge *within*, that which *without* hath bound,
Contrive conveniences, where none I found;
And, every whit as much content receive
In what I have not, as in what I have.
I view not here the pleaſures of the fields
Or what a Garden, Grove, or Meddow yields
Which were of late my daily recreation,
But, I have *Viſions* by my contemplation,
Which hither, during my Confinement brings
Not only ſights of more eſſential things
But an aſſurance of enjoyments too,
Whereof I doubted more a while ago.
I could not be at that *Solemnization*
Which honoured my *Soveraigns* Coronation,
Nor ſaw his Royal Train in their late Marches
Through LONDON, under their *Triumphant* (*Arches*;
Yet in my ſolitarineſs, alone,
What they were doing, I did think upon,

With

With what ſhould elſe be done, that's not done yet
And, which I wiſh we may not quite forget,
Nor ſo long, that there, may at length be loſt
Much real honour, and no little coſt;
And which, perhaps, to bring now into mind
By this expreſſion, I am thus confin'd;
For Providence, did neither me reſtrain
At this time, nor infuſe theſe thoughts in vain.
Ionick, *Dorick*, and *Corinthians* works,
In which, an *Architectors* cunning lurks
Apart, or inter-wove (with that apply'd
Whereby it may be richly beautifi'd)
I can conceive, as if I ſaw it made,
And all which paintings thereunto can add.
I know, as well as they who did behold
That coſtly *Show*, what Silver, Silk and Gold,
Pearls, Diamonds, and precious Rubies, can
Contribute to adorn a horſe or man.
I have ſeen all materials which were thither,
To make up that great triumph, brought together.
Princes and Dukes, and Marqueſſes and Earls,
Plebeians, Men and Women, Boyes and Girls,
As many thouſands as then preſent were
I did as well imagine to be there
As if I them had ſeen; and can ſuppoſe
Not only what is acted at ſuch Shows,
But alſo, more than was at any one
Since firſt the *Roman* Triumphs were begun,
And fancy by my ſelf ſuch glorious things
As would quite beggar Emperors and Kings
To repreſent them. So, by being there
I had but ſeen a meaner Show than here
My fancy could have made; and what had I
Been then, I pray, advantaged thereby?

What

What had I gained then, by ſitting long
And paying, to be crowded in a throng?
What great contentment could I have deriv'd
From what Mechanick Artiſts had contriv'd,
Compar'd to that which my imagination
Contriv'd in honour of that Coronation?
At which the Trophies coſt, at moſt, no more
Than would have made ſome needy perſons poor?
I ſeldom took, at any time much pleaſure
In *Shows*, which ev'ry vulgar eye can meaſure,
And time and coſt require to make them gay,
Yet in a moment vaniſh quite away,
Behinde them leaving nothing that conduces
To Pious, Moral, or to Civil uſes.
What though I did not ſee the *King* that day?
I did in my *Confinement*, for him pray
As heartily as any perſon there,
And, GOD, perhaps, aſſoon the ſame will bear,
Although my *Tongue* was not then heard among
Thoſe Acclamations of the vulgar throng,
Which did ſalute his ear; my ſilent *Voice*
Wing'd with Devotion (though it made no noiſe)
Aſcended Heav'n, and may bring bleſſings down,
Which will conduce to ſetling of his Crown,
If he unfix it not by miſ-endeavour,
Or, valuing of the *Gift* more than the *Giver*.
I do preſume his duties on that day
He did diſcharge; and (wiſhing others may
Perform their duties to him) do not envy
The glory of that day's Solemnity
To him, for whom 'twas purpoſ'd, nor the ſight,
Thereof, to thoſe who took therein delight;
But wiſh'd, both might be perfectly contented
In what was at that preſent repreſented.

And

And hope, nought was to him aſcribed then,
Which rather appertains to GOD than *Men*:
For, when to *Hereds* eloquent Orations
The people gave blaſphemous Acclamations,
And he that honour to himſelf apply'd,
Whereby, GOD ought to have been glorifi'd,
The Doom, which that offence did on him bring,
Made him a lifeleſs, and a louzie King.
Of theſe things my confinement did produce
Some thoughts, which are perhaps of ſome good uſe.
I, likewiſe exercis'd my Meditation,
That day, on other things which have relation
To what was then in act; and mus'd upon
That, which occaſion gave of things then done,
On ſome now paſt, and upon other ſome
Which probably will be in time to come.
I mus'd upon the *Changes*, and the Chances,
The Publick Troubles, and Deliverances
Which I have ſeen. I ſeriouſly did ponder
GODS, and *Mens* actions joyntly and aſunder;
Our fooliſh Projects, his wiſe Providences,
Both in their Progreſs, and their Conſequences.
I thought both on the *People* and the *King*,
What good or evil poſſibly might ſpring
From their deportments towards one another
Now by GODS mercy they are brought together.
On thoſe too, in particular, I thought
Whom, GOD into his power hath lately brought:
How great, erewhile, his wants and ſufferings were,
What, his enjoyments at this preſent are;
And, on ſome other matters, not a few,
Which theſe, to my conſideration drew,
And which perhaps, that day had been by none
Mus'd on, ſo much, had I not been alone.

More-

Moreover it occaſion'd thoughts of that
Which to a Nobler Object doth relate;
Even to that Kingdom, King, and Coronation,
That ſhould be thought on with more veneration
Than all the *Monarchs* in their greateſt glory,
Who now live, or are memoriz'd in ſtory.
My *Contemplation*, with as much content,
As others had, to me did repreſent
That *DAY* wherein *CHRIST* through *Jeruſalem*
Rode meekly on an *Aſs*, whilſt after him
The people throng'd or laqued by his ſide,
And voluntarily *HOSANNA* cry'd,
Yet afterward purſuing him with ſcorns
Cry'd *Crucifie*, and crowned him with Thorns;
And this, me thought, was ſo conſiderable,
That it made all our Pomp ſeem deſpicable.
For, then my Muſes drew me by degrees,
To meditate on what my ſoul fore-ſees
Concerning them, who, whilſt they do pretend
CHRIST's *Kingdom*, do purſue another end;
And that, which for his glory was beſtown,
Make uſe of, for advancement of their own.
Not ſeldom, likewiſe, I then thought upon
Thoſe many thouſand families undone,
Who ſit and weep through want of what that day
Was waſtfully and vainly, thrown away,
At ſuch a time, wherein both Man and GOD,
Proceedings lookt for in another mode,
And when, our publick hazards and diſtreſs,
Requir'd another way of thankfulneſs.
Upon that ſolemn day, (not without wonder)
I ſaw and heard, the Lightning, rain, and thunder
Wherewith GOD ſeem'd to anſwer and out-vy
Our Guns and fire-Works, (though I was not nigh)

And such-resemblance had the works of *Art*,
To Nature's, that they could not be apart
Distinguish'd; but that, to prevent our error,
The last was loudest, and infus'd more terrour.
This, I observed well; and furthermore
Took special heed, that nigh two Moneths before,
And likewise ever since, from Rainy weather
We were not oft free, one whole day together,
Until that Royal Triumph was begun,
Nor till that moment wherein it was done:
Yet, durst I not be so prophane, to say
(As one hath writ) *it dar'd not rain that day.*
Nor at that time, *Flaminian like*, durst I
Conjecture by a *Heathenish Augurie*
What GOD thereby intended: but, with awe
Consider'd upon what I heard and saw:
And I confess, the *Lightning*, *Rain*, and *Thunder*
At this our *Seed-time*, caused me to ponder
On that, which *Samuel* prayed GOD to send
In Harvest-time, and what that did portend;
Which I conceive to be a Meditation
Not then improper, for my Contemplation.
And, though some peradventure may suspect
That these expressions, may some way reflect
On what concerns them, it concerns him more
Whose cause and honour I prefer before
All earthly things; and can be not afraid,
Who ere shall be displeas'd with what I've said;
For, I was barr'd from seeing what is done
By men; that, GODS works might be mused on.
Such things, although we then much mind them
Should not amidst our Triumphs be forgot; (not,
And, that, (which then by me was thought upon)
Much more effectually, perhaps, was done

In

In this condition which I now am in,
Than could in that ſtate, wherein I have been:
Forgot therefore, by others, if it be
It will ſeem no great wonderment to me;
For, who remember *Joſephs* in their ſports,
Or in the jollities at Princes Courts?
Confinement (which I once a damage thought)
To me, hath other priviledges brought.
It manifeſts apparently to me
Who are my *Kinſmen*, who my *Neighbours* be;
And whether he who paſſeth by me than,
Be *Levite*, *Prieſt*, or a *Samaritan*:
For, Neighbourhood and Kindred, he beſt tryes
That's robbed, wounded, or, impriſon'd lyes.
In *Liberty*, I ſometimes doubted whether
They, who then came to viſit me, were either
My *Friends* or *Foes*, for, I found other while
They whom I truſted moſt, did moſt beguile.
But, few or none my *Viſitants* now are
Save they, whoſe Viſitations are ſincere;
The *Friends* I got, when I did walk abroad
I gain'd my ſelf: Theſe, are made mine by GOD.
Theſe were acquired without pains or coſt;
Not won by merit, nor by ſmall faults loſt.
The firſt, were for proſperity decreed,
The latter, for my help, in time of need,
And ſought my Body out, unknown before
Becauſe, they heard it was diſtreſt, and poor;
Which hath to me, Confinement ſweeter made,
Than all the Freedoms which I lately had;
And, me, with that *Communion* of the *Saints*,
Experimentally, it now acquaints,
Which, in this life enjoyed is, by all,
Who, in the life to come, enjoy it ſhall.

A *Priſon*, cannot dreadful ſeem to me,
For, there I firſt was taught my *A*, *B*, *C*,
In *Sufferings*: There, when I had ſcarcely paſt
Mine *Nonage*, to be ſchooled I was place'd.
And, ſo long as the Providence of GOD,
Was pleas'd, that, to inſtruct me with that *Rod*,
I ſhould continue my abiding there,
Princes, my *Tutors*, and Correctors were.
A *Priſon*, is that *Houſe of Diſcipline*,
Wherein the *MARTYRS* uſually begin
To be *Probationers*; it is the *Colledge*
Of *SAINTS*, wherein experimental knowledge
Is firſt acquired by a carnal ſenſe
Of that, which tries their Chriſtian patience.
Priſons, to them, are ſanctified *Temples*,
Wherein, they by their meekneſs and examples
Preach to the world by *Deeds* (a powerful way)
What, many other do but meerly *ſay*.
And, as our *Prelates*, in each *Cathedral*
Have ſeveral places, which they pleaſe to call
More or leſs holy: ſo, there likewiſe be
Impriſonments of differing degree:
The *Outer-ward*, an entertainment gives
Moſt commonly to Murtherers and Thieves,
Or, ſuch like malefactors, who diſpleaſe
The world ſometimes, and interrupt her eaſe,
For which they are confin'd, till their juſt guerdon
They ſhall receive, or bribe her for a pardon;
And whereto ſhe gives all advantages
That may in *Priſons* granted be to theſe.
But, all her *Priſoners* are not confin'd
To Wards, and Receptacles of one kind.
The *Inner-wards*, which do to me appear
The ſame that *Chancels* unto *Churches* are,

Are

Are not made uſe of (except now and then)
But for moſt holy and *Religious men.*
The deepeſt *Dungeons* be reſerv'd for thoſe
Who dare our *Vices*, or her *Luſts* oppoſe;
Or, things repugnant to our ends profeſs,
(When mov'd thereto by conſcientiouſneſs)
And, whoſoere preſumes to plead their caſes,
As *Innocents*, doth hazard in like places
His own *Reſtraint*; or elſe unto ſuſpects,
Which peradventure may have worſe effects.
Yet, *Freedom* yields to none ſo much content,
As theſe enjoy, by ſuch *Impriſonment.*
For, they with inward comforts are delighted,
Whilſt they with outward darkneſs are benighted:
And ſweet *Refreſhments*, in amongſt them come
When they are throng'd up in a naſty Room.
When, they of their familiars are depriv'd,
They are by thoſe, who knew them not, reliev'd;
When they from *earthly men*, faſt lockt have been,
Celeſtial Angels have ſometime broke in;
Knockt off their chains; the gates and doors unbar'd
The *Priſon* ſhook; the ſturdy *Jaylor* ſcarr'd
And made him (falling down before them too)
Cry, *Men and Brethren, ſay, what ſhall we do?*
A *Priſon* is the beſt *retiring Room*
That can be got; the beſt *Muſeolum*
For him, wherein to contemplate, that would
Thoſe Objects without fallacy behold,
Which moſt concern him; or would notions have
Of what he ought to *do*, *hope* or *believe*;
For, moſt of thoſe things, which abroad he ſpies,
Either delude his ears, or blind his eyes,
Pervert his *Judgement*, or withdraw his mind
From that, wherein his welfare he might find.

A *Priſon* is a place; which he that can
Make uſe of, as becomes a prudent man,
Findes there, more laſting, and more perfect ſolace
Than in the greateſt earthly Princes Pallace;
And, when he knows what *Priviledges* are
In this condition, will ſcorn all that's there.
In *Priſon*, quickly, underſtand he ſhall
The worſt that can to him, at laſt, befall.
There, he may notice take, how moſt men pother
Themſelves; what plagues they are unto each other.
How, cauſeleſly men terrified are
By thoſe, to whom they dreadful would appear;
And, peradventure, if they patient be
That, they purſued by their *Foes* will ſee,
By which their ſelf-deſtruction ſhall be wrought,
And thoſe freed, whom they into bondage brought.
There, they may learn, that to make black or white,
One hair, or add one ſtraws-breadth to their height
Care nought avails; and in that poor eſtate
To laugh at all the worlds deſpight and hate:
For, over them, no power then left ſhe hath,
Except of proſecuting them to death,
Which them ten thouſand fold will happier make
Than all, that ſhe can either *give* or *take*.
Theſe are ſuch benefits as I enjoy,
By what, now ſeems my *Freedom* to deſtroy.
In *Priſon*, too, this priviledge I have,
That, *living*, I deſcend into my *Grave*,
And by my *Contemplation* can fore-ſee
What my condition in that place will be.
I ſearch it to the bottom, by that ſpark
Of Light, which ſhineth brighteſt in the dark.
The terrours of that Dungeon I fore-ſtall,
I, (as it were) pre-act my *Funeral*,

And

And in a manner alſo, ſee and hear
What will be ſaid and done, when I am there;
Which are advantages not to be known,
Whilſt in the world I flutter up and down.
In *Priſon* alſo, when leaſt room I have,
And cloſe am kept, I, far beyond the Grave
Do *Proſpects* view; and can ſee pretty well
What may concern men, both in *Heaven* and *Hell*;
Whereof, if here I ſhould my knowledge ſpeak
Them, for Phanatick dreams, the world would take;
And not believe the things I could declare,
Becauſe, ſhe knows that I was never there;
And, therefore, Ile proceed again to ſhow
What, my *Experiments* are here below.

Reſtraint, from me, hath totally ſhut out
That frivelous, and that offenſive *Rout*,
Which interrupts my *Muſings* with diſcourſe
That's either wholly vain, or ſomewhat worſe:
For, to nought elſe, it for the moſt part tends
But fruitleſs complements, or graceleſs ends;
And, what among us, is at meetings blown,
Wrongs other mens affairs, or elſe our own,
Whereas, our words whilſt here we are together,
Tend to the edifying of each other,
In *Faith* or *Manners*; or elſe, to improve
That *Hope*, that *Meekneſs*, *Conſtancy* and *Love*
Which may enable, patiently to bear
Thoſe Burthens, wherewith we oppreſſed are:
And, when our *Bodies* are aſunder gone,
We never leave each other quite alone;
For, we (ev'n when corporeally apart)
Are preſent, both in *Spirit* and in *Heart*.

Though this *Fraternity* did often minde me,
Till my *Impriſonment* they could not finde me,

Nor did I know their persons. Thou, therefore
Oh *foolish world*, to my content add'st more
By my *Restraint*, than if to me were given
All carnal Freedoms on this side of Heaven;
And, if this be the great'st harms thou canst do,
Prethee, let every spight thou dost be two.

But, all the comforts which best friends afford,
(As they are men) may prove like *Jonah's* Gourd;
For, as next morning, that, did wither quite
Which GOD did cause to spring up in one night,
So, when the *Sun* burns, or a *sharp wind* blows,
This may as quickly fade, as it arose:
For, Death or Injuries, do every day
Take those mens lives, or, their estates away
Who are most charitable, and, of bread
They may have need, by whom I have been fed,
For, unto all men underneath the Sun
That may betide which doth befall to one.
Not therefore, upon those things which GOD sends,
But, on *himself* alone, my soul depends:
Here, all my confidence, *vain world*, is plac't,
Or else I might be ruined at last;
And all my present hopes, as vain would be,
As if I had repos'd my trust in thee.

By this *Restriction*, not a few temptations
Will be repelled; many deviations
Of mine prevented; duties better done;
Things which have been forgot, more thought upon;
It peradventure may prepare me too,
For what I'm yet to *suffer* and to *do*,
Much better than that *Freedom* did, or could,
Which, by the *Common Tenure* I did hold:
And who knows, but some corporal mis-hap
I may or did by this Restraint escape,

Which

Which might have elſe befell me when together
The people throng'd and trod upon each other.
Which, though no more but ſhunning ſo much
As breaking of a *neck*, a *legg*, or *arm*, (harm,
Were conſiderable, and ten to one
Such miſ-adventures daily fall upon (them,
Some perſons unconfin'd, when they leaſt dread
Becauſe, where dangers are, they little heed them.
Scap'd I no more here, than that ſlaviſh load
Of *Complementings*, wherewithall abroad
Men tire themſelves, and others; that, alone
Sufficient were, if well conſider'd on,
To make amends for all the ſufferings
Which my confinement now upon me brings.
For, as to pay this *life*, I am a debter
To *Nature*, and then hope to have a better,
My *Wants*, *Reſtraints*, and *Poverty* do leſs
Afflict my *Body*, by all that diſtreſs
Now laid upon it, than my ſoul hath been
To *hear* and *ſee*, what I have *heard* and *ſeen*,
Whileſt I had liberty abroad to go,
And hear and ſee, what many *ſay* and *do*:
With what diſſembling *Complements*, *Careſſes*,
Affected *Speeches*, *flattering Addreſſes*,
And falſe *Pretendings*, men of ev'ry ſort
Do cheat, fool, claw, and one another court,
As if they did *Realities* intend
When, in meer *Nullities*, at laſt they end.
How, *Letters*, *Promiſes*, *Vows*, *Declarations*,
Orders, *Oaths*, *Covenants*, and *Proteſtations*
Annihilated are, and turn to ſmoak
Or ſtinks, which rather poiſon us, and choak
Than truly nouriſh; and how they go on
In acting ſtill, ſuch things as they have done

Who

Who are deſtroyed; and yet, nere the leſs,
Dream they purſue the waies of *Happineſs*.
I am, as well pleas'd, with my ſad condition,
As others, with what they have in fruition,
And, if deſire a longer life I could,
For nothing elſe the ſame deſire I ſhould,
Except it were that I might live to ſee
What GOD will do, and what their end will be.
Frequent I cannot, with conveniency
(As lately, when I had my Liberty,
I might have done) the *Publick Congregation*;
But, I, upon GOD's *Word*, by meditation,
(To exerciſe my ſelf) may ſet apart
The time they dedicate; and both my heart
And my beſt *Faculties*, employ that day,
In preaching ſomewhat to the world *my way*
Which will advance GOD's glory, and improve
My Brethren in good life, hope, faith, and love:
Or, that prepare, which thereunto may tend,
When *Daies* and *Times*, with me will have an end:
And, GOD (I know) confines not *Saving Graces*
To ordinary *Means*, *Forms*, *Times*, or *Places*,
Nor is diſpleaſed when his ſervices
Endeavour'd are, without contentiouſneſs,
As we are able, and with upright heart,
Though of our duties we may fail in part.
Some other *Notions*, which in this eſtate
Are apprehended, I might now relate,
Which further may illuſtrate thoſe miſ-haps
That man by an *Impriſonment* eſcapes
But, they are Trifles to what I poſſeſs,
In my conſtrained *Solitarineſs*.
For, though it be not what I might have choſe
(Had I been left unto mine own diſpoſe)

It

It proves much better: and for that reſpect
What I moſt naturally do affect
I dare not abſolutely to requeſt,
(Much leſs make choice of) but to him that beſt
Knows what's beſt for me, wholly have reſign'd
Both mine own *ſelf*, and things of ev'ry kind.
'Tis he, who hath aſſign'd this lot, and all
What ere it be, which thereby doth befall;
And, this Reſtraint, not only makes him dearer
To me, but alſo, to *him*, draws me nearer,
So that the more my troubles do increaſe,
The nearer unto him is my acceſs.
He, fortifies my confidence in him,
And heartens me, the *World* thus to contemn,
As boldly as if doubtleſs cauſe there were
For her to fear me, more than I fear her.
I have my fears, but they are nothing elſe
Save what *Perdues* and *Scouts*, and *Centinels*
Are to an *Army*: they do not diſ-heart
A valiant *Souldier*; though they make him ſtart
At firſt *Alarm*; but cauſe him to prepare
For thoſe aſſaults, which nigh approaching are.
When I am judged, in an undone-caſe,
Becauſe, confin'd, in wants, and in diſtreſs;
When all my outward Comforters are gone,
And, I lie muſing on my bed alone
Of what I knew before, or heard that day;
Of what my *Friends* fear, and my *Foes* do ſay;
What men they are, who ſeem with me offended,
What is already *done*, and what *intended*;
Sometimes a little ſhuddring doth begin,
As if a panick-fear were breaking in,
Which he marks, ere to me it doth appear
Forthwith, ſteps down betwixt me and that fear

Supplies

Supplies defects, expelleth doubts and ſadneſs,
Repleniſheth my heart with ſober gladneſs,
About me ſets his *Angels*, watch to keep,
And (as to his beloved) gives me ſleep.

Theſe things conſidered, *Priſons* and *Reſtraints*
(Which have been long, the portion of the *Saints*)
Are not alone things little to be fear'd,
But alſo many times to be preferr'd
Before thoſe *Liberties*, and all thoſe things
That can be found in Palaces of Kings;
What ere their flatterers are pleas'd to ſay,
By fruitleſs hopes, to drive their fears away.
For, more are there endanger'd, more deſtroy'd:
There, many times, is leſs content enjoy'd,
Leſs outward ſafety, and a great deal leſs,
Of what conduceth to true happineſs,
Than in a *Priſon*: And who ere well heeds
What, there is done, and what thereon ſucceeds
Will finde cauſe, their condition to bewail
Sometimes, much more, than his that's in a Gaol.
For, errors flowing from *Proſperity*
Indanger more, becauſe unſeen they lie.
Men may by their Afflictions be prepar'd
For whatſoere can follow afterward,
And are oft fitted by a lingring grief,
For future happineſs in death or life:
But, while corrupted by exceſſive Treaſures,
Befool'd with honours, and bewitch'd with plea-
The cauſe of *ſelf-deſtruction* ſtill they nouriſh; (ſures,
They grow as brutiſh as the beaſts that periſh;
And, daily, ſo beſotted, by degrees
That, ſenſe of their *humanity* they leeſe; (ter,)
So long dream, they are GOD's (or ſomewhat grea-
Till they are *Devils*, or but little better;

And

And ſuddenly, when they think all goes well,
Sink from ſuppoſed *Happineſs* to HELL.
Moſt men, (yea very many of the beſt)
Their *Talents*, till they Palm-like down are preſt,
Improve not; nor their Duties truly do,
Till by Afflictions they are whipt thereto.
A *Priſon*, was long time the School, wherein
Chaſt *Joſeph* thoſe progreſſions did begin,
Which, him forth from obſcurity did bring
To be the ſecond perſon to a *King*.
Jonas was not obedient to GOD'S *Call*
Till he, both by a *Storm*, and by a *Whale*,
Was diſciplin'd: And, if I had a thought
My duties were performed as they ought
In any thing, affirmed it ſhould be
That, thereto my Afflictions fitted me:
For, ſuch like *Simples*, as I am, require
To make them yield forth Oyl, the *Preſs*, or *Fire*,
My *Flinty-nature* gives not out one ſpark
To light my ſelf, or others in the dark,
Till knockt with *Steel*. This knowledge I have gain'd
Of mine own temper, and it is unfain'd.
To be *impriſon'd*, *ſlander'd*, or made *poor*,
Shall therefore, henceforth, frighten me no more,
Nor make me, whilſt I live aſham'd of either
Of thoſe three *Lots*, nor of them altogether.
Prieſts, *Prophets*, *Kings* and *Saints*, yea (whilſt abode
He made on earth) the glorious Son of GOD
Was pleaſed to ſubmit to all of them
(But to the latter two in an extream)
And, with ſuch Company, Ile undergo
My ſhare, and think, I'm thereby honour'd too.
To this effect, much more might here be ſaid,
But, this will be ſufficient, if well weigh'd,

Which

Which, I ſuſpect; for, very few men heed,
Or mind, long, what they *hear*, or what they *read*.

SLANDER is more Beneficiall than PRAISE.

WHo, can expreſs the pain of being ſtung
With ſuch a *fiery Serpent* as the *TONGUE*?
Or, what can cure it, but his being ey'd,
Whom, once, the *Brazen Serpent* typifi'd?
'Tis far more ſharp than Arrows, Darts or Spears;
Down to the heart, it pierces through the ears;
Not only wounds, but frighteth alſo more
Than murthring *Canons*, when they loudeſt roar;
Afflicteth us, whilſt here we draw our breath,
And, *Gangreeve-like*, ſo ſpreadeth after death
(Ev'n to poſterity upon our *Names*)
That it deſtroys the life of *honeſt Fames*.
This fury *SLANDER*, hath been quarter'd long,
In *Rotten-Row*, and *Hart-ſtreet*, at the *Tongue*;
Her *Magazens* and *Forges* are all there,
The *Shop* at which ſhe vents them, is the *Ear*,
In ev'ry Town and City; and no places
Or perſons, her aſperſions and diſgraces
Can long avoid: For, ev'ry where ſhe ſcatters
That ſhot wherewith the Forts of *Fame* ſhe batters.
So venemous it is, that every touch
Proves mortal, or indangers very much,
And nothing ſhooteth more impoyſoned pellets,
Except it be the flatteries of *Prelates*.
I muſt confeſs, that many years ago
I therewith have been often wounded ſo

That,

That, very well, content I could have been
To lye down, where I might no more be ſeen;
And, my ſtupidity is not, yet, ſuch
As not to feel indignities as much
As any man: But, I have learned how
To change my *Sickneſſes* to *Phyſick*, now:
And when the world intendeth me a ſhame
By retroverſion to convert the ſame
To that, which from beſpattrings purifies,
And makes me both her *Blame* and *Praiſe* deſpiſe,
No more diſpleaſ'd, or pleaſed therewithall
Than if a *whibling Cur*, ſhould fawn or bawl.
For, unto thoſe Oppreſſions, heretofore
And now lay'd on me, whatſoever more
The world ſhall add; though they a while oppreſs,
Will, ſhortly, make them, not alone much leſs
But, alſo none at all; and wheel about
Upon her ſelf, as ſoon as my Turn's out.
Praiſe, is a pleaſing thing, to fleſh and blood,
Yet, often doth it much more harm than good;
Puffs up with Pride, ore-weening and vain glory,
Or, with affection to things tranſitory
Beyond a ſafe *Mean*; and makes men ſuppoſe
Themſelves to be, what ev'ry neighbour knows
They are not; yea, what they themſelves do ſee
They neither are, nor poſſibly can be.
Whereas, to be without a cauſe deſpiſ'd,
Diſpraiſ'd, reproach'd, ſcoft, jeer'd and ſcandaliz'd,
An undue ſelf-opinion doth remove
True Meekneſs and Humility improve;
Brings Conſtancy and Patience to their tryal,
And, at the laſt, to ſuch a *Self-denial*,
As in the cloſe will more contentment give us
Than all, whereof a *Slander* can deprive us.

The

The *flatteries* of his *Lords*, made *Joash* ſtumble,
Reviling ſpeeches, made King *David* humble,
Good men, by *praiſes*, oft, are evil made,
But, by *Reproaches* harm they never had.

The *World*, which beſt is pleaſ'd with her own
For that falſe titulary honor ſcrabbles, (*baubles*
Which is compoſ'd of aiery Attributes,
Or, which opinion only conſtitutes:
And, all her happineſs, dependant ſeems
On vulgar approbations and eſteems,
Which are, indeed, her *Portion*: but, to thoſe,
Who can look both beyond, and through the *Shows*,
That ſuch *Toies* make, nought therein doth appear
To merit their deſire, love, hate or fear:
And, therefore, they reſpect them, (come, or go)
As Reaſon them obliges thereunto,
Or, as things, which (if grace divine be granted)
Indifferently, may be poſſeſt or wanted; (them,
Make ſuch uſe as they ſerve to, whilſt they have
And yield them, when reſum'd, to thoſe who gave
For, had *external honours* in this place, (them.
Been truly more eſſential than *diſgrace*,
To *happineſs eternal*; CHRIST had waved
The ſcandals of the *Croſs*; we had been ſaved
And ſanctifi'd ſhould be without thoſe troubles,
Scorns and reproaches, which the world now
And may redouble: yea, in vain had he (doubles
A promiſe made, that they ſhould bleſſed be
Who in his ſufferings do with him partake,
And are reproach'd and ſlander'd for his ſake.

Theſe things conſider'd, I am at full reſt;
Slanders infringe not my chief intereſt.
Good or *Ill words* will me no more concern
When I am dead, than when I was unborn.

And,

And, whilst I live, (as is inferr'd before)
They harm a little, and they profit more.
If *Scandals* neither mend nor mar my health,
Increase not troubles, nor decrease my wealth,
Save in opinion onely; all those losses
Are cur'd, if my vote, that opinion crosses.
And (prate who list) I will as merry bee
As is a *Pye* upon a Cherry-tree.
Praise, or *dispraises*, if so be my heart
Assures, that neither of them by desert
To mee belongs, my own *Phanatick brain*
Is cause of all, whereof I do complain,
Or take delight in: *praise*, *blame*, *bless*, or *curse*,
I am no whit the better, or the worse;
And, all men are as much concern'd as I
In what's then spoken be it *Truth*, or *Lye*.
If of a hundred *Crimes I* guilty were,
All which, as evidently did appear,
As in a cloudless day, the *Sun* at noon;
The world, but as the spots within the *Moon*,
Would look upon them, if, for my defence
I have a *face* well brazd with impudence;
An Oily *Tongue*, a *Crocodiles* moist eye,
Can finde great *Friends*, bribe, flatter, fawn and lye,
Ore-awe my neighbours, or, my self express
A friend to them, in their licentiousnesse.
But, were *I*, both *in words* and *deeds*, as free
From just reproof, as mortal man may be,
Had *I*, but one great neighbour, who envies
All men suppos'd more honest, or more wise,
Than hee is thought; therewith a neighbourhood,
Which takes delight in nothing that is good;
Abhorring all, as their injurious foes,
Who, them, in their unrighteous waies oppose;
Or, if *I* be constrained to have dealing,
With such, by some relation, or nigh dwelling,

Who think, there's nothing rational or just,
But, what tends to their *profit*, or their *lust*;
It is impossible to scape the wrongs
Of wicked hands, or of malicious tongues:
And, therefore, he, with whom it thus doth fare
Must study *patience*, how his lot to bear;
And in this case, can look for no defence
But from GODS Justice, and his *Innocence*,
Which is sufficient unto them that know
What consolations from those fountains flow.
What, is there to be fear'd in *Slandrous Tales*,
Whether, they shall be either true or false?
A *false Report* more mischieves those who spread it,
Than harmeth me. If it impairs my credit,
I may recover it again ere long,
And also peradventure, by that wrong
Improve some *Vertue*, or abate some *Pride*,
Within my self till that time, unespy'd.
Although hard words, give harder knocks than stones,
And crack our *Credits*, yet, they break no *Bones*;
And, if unjustly thrown, by spightful fingers,
They prove most mischievous unto their flingers.
One fault which *Conscience* findes, afflicts me more
Than twenty slanders, yea than twenty score:
So long as that lyes quietly in me,
I shall not care who my *Accusers* be;
And, when that shall accuse me (as sometime
It doth) I sue out an Appeal to him
Who straight acquits me; else I must confess
I should as much fear mine own *Righteousness*
As all my *Sins*; for, I esteem them both
Alike impure, and as a menstruous cloath.
If I am justly blam'd for things misdone,
Or, for faults wherein I am going on,
It doth by bringing on me shame of face,
Repentance bring, and to that state of Grace

From

From which I falling was; and stay the course
Which might have drawn me on from bad to worse,
Until, that by habituated sin,
Endless Impenitency had broke in:
Much more, therefore, to these I am a debter
Who speak ill, than to those men who speak better
Than I deserve: And, though that in their ends
They differ, they may be as useful friends
Who speak of me opprobriously, sometimes,
As they, who praise me, or excuse my crimes.
For, I have long observ'd that all *Relations*,
Nigh or far off (what ever Obligations
Have nearly joyned them, or whatsoere
Their *Quarrels*, *Bonds*, or *Disobligements* are)
Be (for the most part) either friends or foes,
But, as a prosp'rous, or a cross wind blows;
Or, as their inter'st or Expectancy
May be secur'd, or doth at hazzard lye.
The *Love* or *Hatred*, which I finde in them,
Differs but in the *Measure*, or the *Time*,
Or, in th'*Occasions*, which have them inclin'd,
To friendliness, or else to be unkinde.
They frown or smile, they praise, or they disgrace,
Destroy and save, and stab, or else imbrace,
Even as the fit which comes upon them, takes them,
And either pleased, or displeased makes them.
Such will their words and deeds be then to thee,
What ere thou art to them, or they to thee.
As bitter Language, I have heard 'twixt those
That were dear Lovers, as 'twixt greatest Foes;
Yea, and more bitter too, in some respects
Considering their *Causes* and *Effects*.
A *Foes* Revilings very sharp appear,
But, when our *Friends* exasperated are
With, or *without Cause given of offence*,
There is between them greater difference

(Or at the leaſt, but very little leſs)
Than taſted is between the bitterneſs
Of unpeel'd *Wallnut-kernels*, and *ſtrong Gall*,
VVhen with our tongues diſtinguiſh them we ſhall.
Moreover, *I* have ſometimes alſo ſeen
That, they, who have unto each other been
Moſt miſchievous, ſo reconcil'd together
(Though little vertue hath appear'd in either)
So kind in *words* and *deeds*, for outward ends,
And, ſo ingaged mutually as friends
In their Concernments, as if they had never
At variance been; but, hearty friends for ever.
VVhich, when *I* mind, *I* neither pleaſure have
In *Praiſes*, nor do ſlanders me bereave
Of much content, from whom ſoe're they come,
So long as I finde *Innocence* at home;
Nor, in my own reſpect at any time,
So griev'd am I, as otherwhile for them
VVho have miſ-cenſur'd me; becauſe I know
From what diſtempers uſually they flow;
And that the ſob'reſt and the wiſeſt men
Have ſome *Deliriums* on them now and then.
Exception is not alwayes to be took
By what ſhall by a *Friend* or *Foe* be ſpoke:
For, men in paſſion, whether they appear.
Pleas'd or diſpleas'd, ſpeak few things as they are,
Nor alwayes as they think, but, rather ſay
That, which the paſſion bearing then chief ſway
Tranſports them to; although a wound it give
To their own ſouls, which pains them whilſt they live.
But, *Friends* and *Foes*, both *good and ill reports*,
And, all terreſtrial things of every ſort,
VVill ſhortly have an end (with me at leaſt.)
The worſt, as well as that whereof the beſt
Eſteem I had, will into *nothing* fly:
My *Slanders*, and my *Slanderers* will dye.

At

At present, therefore them no more I dread
Than if I saw they were already dead;
And, that which dead or living, shall to me
Befall, will equally forgotten be.
By living, I, their scandals may out-live,
And good proofs of my innocency give.
When I am dead, what ever men shall please
To speak or do, it cannot me disease:
And, they who after death do men defame,
Or shall expose their bodies unto shame,
Bring that dishonour which they did intend
To others, on themselves, at latter end:
Yea, make some question, and suspect their merits;
Repute them persons of ignoble spirits;
And, what they hoped should confirm their peace,
Their terrours and their dangers will increase.
Slanders (though poyson in themselves) have been
To me a precious *Antidote* for sin,
Preventing, not a few times more than one,
That, wherein else perhaps I had mis-done,
(And I, thereby, effects like his have found
Who had a *Sickness* cured by a *wound*)
Whereas, contrariwise, a vain *Applause*
Of sins or follies, are a frequent cause.
I well remember, that, when I was young
(And in both kinds an Object of the *Tongue*,
As now I am) I reaped, many wayes,
By *Slanders*, much more profit than by *Praise*.
For, *Praises* made me sometimes over-ween,
And (as if no defects in me had been)
Neglect the means, that, supplements might add
To what, I more in *Show*, than *Substance* had.
It, likewise, me to envy did expose,
From which great disadvantages arose,
And scandals, without cause: But *Grace divine*
Cross'd thereby, what the *Devil* did design:

For, *Defamation*, ſo ſoon was begun,
That, what it charg'd me with, was never done.
That, ſin prevented was, and many more
By ſending of the *Scandal* forth before
The *Crime* was acted; So, into a *Bleſſing*
A *Curſe* was turn'd, which merits this confeſſing;
And alſo, me obliges, all my dayes,
On all occaſions, to give GOD the praiſe;
For, if, perhaps it had over-flowed then,
The ſtream had never kept his bounds again.
The ſcoffs and jeers, caſt on me by the Rimes
Of ſome reputed *Poets* in theſe times
Have been my great advantage; for, th'eſteem
Which in my youthful dayes I had of them
Had elſe perhaps, from my ſimplicity
Drawn me, by their familiarity
To thoſe affected *Vanities* with which
They have infected fools, and claw'd their itch.
Were I but as ambitious of that name
A POET, as they are, and think I am,
It might a little vex me, when I hear
How often, in their *Pamphlets* me they jear,
Becauſe, Truth ſeaſonably I convey
To ſuch as need it, in a homely way,
Beſt pleaſing unto thoſe who do not care
To crack hard *ſhells* in which no *kernels* are;
Or for *ſtrong Lines*, in which is little found,
Save an affected phraſe, and empty ſound.
But, I do read them with a ſmiling pitty
To finde them to be wicked, who are witty.
At their *Detractions*, I do not repine;
Their *Poems* I eſteem as they do mine:
Their *Cenſures*, I with ſleighting overpaſs,
Who, like *words* without *ſenſe*, *wit* without *grace*;
And, better am contented, without cauſe
To hear their *miſ-reports*, than their *Applauſe*.

As

As also, that, they should by *Pantaloons*
Admired be, and honour'd by *Buffoons*.
Yea, as *Job* said, should they a *Book* compile
Against me (as they may, and did erewhile)
I would receive it, on my shoulders bear it,
And as a Crown, upon my head would wear it.
My fearlesness of SLANDERS doth not flow
From Ignorance, which hinders me to know
How, I am scandaliz'd: for it appears
In Print, and I have heard it through both ears.
I daily hear what ignominious lyes
Detraction, to defame me doth devise.
I know, whence they proceed; whereto they tend,
In what likewise they possibly may end:
And it would stagger and affright me too,
Unless I knew the worst, all this could do
For, they, who Idolize the *Prelacy*
Impute to me no less than *Blasphemy*,
And *Sacriledge*: And, I may well expect
That, when their hopes have taken full effect,
Though they with me at present, do but dandle,
They then will curse me with *Bell*, *Book* and *Candle*.
How ever, for their persons I will pray:
For, malice hath not mov'd me to gain-say
Their *Prelacy*; nor hope to get again
What they usurp, and doth to me pertain:
But, meerly conscientiousness of that
Which in my place I vow'd to vindicate.
Some, call me *Traytor* too; but well I wot,
They do not so beleeve, or know me not.
I never did betray my trust to any,
Though I my self have been betray'd by many.
With Traytors I have numbred been of one,
And serv'd their ends, yet I my self was none:
For, if like *Absolons* they did pretend
To *Sacrifice*, and had another end,

I went on in simplicity of heart,
And did not from my Principles depart.
If they intended, or committed *Treason*,
I wronged not my *Conscience*, or my *Reason*.
By ought mis-done, exeept it were, perchance,
Through *over-sight*, or else through *Ignorance*;
For which, the *Plagues now Epidemical*,
To me, as unto other men befall.
I never was in any factious Plot,
Nor likely seems it, by what I have got,
That, with them in their Actings, *I* was one
VVho, thriv'd by those designs they carried on;
Though being subject to the present Law,
I now do suffer, like *Jack Fletchers* Daw.
But, howsoere, *I* seem to merit blame
None, to the King, are truer than *I* am.
Yet, if in *Fame*, we credit may repose,
I am designed to be one of those,
VVho shall not be vouchsaf'd that *Common grace*,
VVhich at his *Coronation* granted was.
GOD's will be done: Perhaps, the King well knows
I need not, what on others he bestows;
Or, to me, singly, will his favour show,
That *I* his Magnanimity may know;
And, that he will more gracious be to those
VVho, him did not maliciously oppose,
Than they, whom *I* did serve, were to their friends,
Because they did not serve them, to their ends.
But, if *Report* hath not divulg'd a *Lye*,
VVhat, can *I* lose, or others get thereby?
My whole estate, already is bereft,
And, what will there be found, where's nothing left?
My life, you'l say; Alas! that's little worth,
It hath been wasting, ever since my birth;
And (when it was at best) too poor a thing,
To satisfie the *Vengeance* of a King.

I

It will to moſt men ſeem ridiculous,
To hear a *Lion Rampant*, kill'd a *Mouſe*,
Or, ſee an Eagle ſtoop down from on high,
To truſſe a *Titmouſe*, or a Butterfly.
The dread of ſuch a loſs will not come neer me,
For, *Age* will ſhortly kill me, though he ſpare me;
And, when there's no conveniency of living,
Life, neither is worth *asking* or the *giving*.
But GOD's intentions, and the hearts of *Kings*,
Are ſuch inſcrutable and hidden things,
That, none can ſearch their bottomes; then much leſs
Can they be fathom'd by maliciouſneſs.
Their wayes of working their own pleaſures out,
Are, many times, by wheeling round about,
By croſs and counter-actings, and by thoſe
Which ſeem'd their own *Deſignments* to oppoſe.
The faithfull'ſt men, they do expoſe oft-times
To hazzards; or with ſuch as are for crimes
Condemn'd, they number them; or, prove them by
Deſertions, diſ-reſpects, and *Poverty*;
And, frequently, do fit them for thoſe places
Wherein they beſt may ſerve them, by diſgraces;
But principally, at thoſe times, wherein,
Hypocriſie, becomes the *Reigning-ſin*.
More things I might inſert, which have relations
In this kinde, to my own prevarications,
And, to th'Improvements, which have oft enſu'd
By *Scandals*, which I then would have eſchew'd.
But, my *Experiments* will work on none,
VVho cannot by their own, be wrought upon.
Conſider therefore all ye unto whom
This *Writing*, by GOD's providence doth come,
VVhat, in your ſelves and others, you have heeded,
VVhich hath from *Slanders*, and from Praiſe proceeded;
And, you ſhall finde more by the laſt undone
Than by the former, at leaſt, ten to one.

Ac-

According to our *Proverb*, the Bell clinketh
Just so, as in his fancy, the fool thinketh
And, they who flattring praises love to hear,
Immediately, such to themselves appear,
As represented by their *Parasite*,
Though no more like than Black-swans are to white.
Such *Panegyricks* I have sometime seen
That, hard to be resolved, it had been,
By him, whose judgement you therein should crave,
Whether, the *Panegyrist* were more *knave*
Than he was *Fool*, for whom, the same was made:
But, of their equal *Impudence* I had
No doubt at all, when wistly I had heeded
What one *gave*, tother *took*, and what *succeeded*.
For, I have oftentimes observ'd, thereby,
Good Men deprav'd; *Great Men*, to Tyranny
Incouraged; That, which is due to men
By Natures Law, at first, they seize and then
Those Attributes, at last, intrude upon
That ought to be ascrib'd to GOD alone.
Which evidences, that, *Immodest Praise*
Is worse than *Slander*, and a ground-work layes,
Whereon a superstructure may be built,
To sink the Builders, down to shame and guilt.
SLANDERS, and *Persecutions* of the *Tongue*
A portion likewise is, which doth belong
Unto the *Saints*; and sanctifi'd they are
By him, with whom, an individual share
Each must expect; we, do but only sup
At brim, he drunk the bottome of the Cup:
We altogether merited the blame,
He underwent the sorrow and the shame.
False witnesses against him were suborn'd;
His Glory was to his dishonour turn'd;
His nearest friends forsook him, and forswore him,
His foes preferr'd a Murtherer before him;

His

His Innocency not alone reproaching,
But, likewise most injuriously incroaching
Upon his righteous person, him pursu'd
Till by a shameful death, he death subdu'd,
And breaking from the grave, to Heav'n ascended,
By Angels to Immortal Life attended;
Where, now inthron'd, he Thrones prepared hath
For all, who follow him in that rough path;
And every slander, scorn, reproach and shame,
He suffr'd here, adds glory to his *Name*.
This is the way, and hath been ever since,
Through which all men must pass, who go from hence
To that *Eternity*, where shall be worn
The Robes of *honour*, when the Rags of scorn
Shall off be thrown. On him I fix mine eyes,
And, that, will me enable to despise
Terrestrial shame and honour: That, makes all
My troubles, when at greatest, seem but small.
That, makes me, whilst my *Body* is confin'd,
Take pleasure, in the freedomes of the *Minde*;
Not dreading present, or ensuing wrongs,
Of wicked hands, or of malicious tongues.
This *Paradox*, it helps me to maintain,
That, where the Grace of GOD is not in vain,
More profit, bittrest reproach affords,
Than all the worlds *Applauses*, and *fair words*.

Poverty is more profitable than Riches.

ANother *Black-Guard* hath beleagur'd me,
That, seems to be the worst of all the three
For, therewith, whosoever hath to do,
Still is in danger of these other two,

Im-

Impriſonment and *Slander*, who attend
On *Poverty* unto her latter end.
Yet, whatſoever in her ſelf ſhe ſeem,
She merits not a total diſ-eſteem:
For, 'tis an inſtrument of good and evil,
Oft-times imploy'd againſt us by the *Devil*,
And, oft by GOD himſelf, to ſuch effects
As may prevent the miſchief he projects,
By tempring to thoſe manifold abuſes
Which *Riches* being miſ-employ'd produces.
There are two ſorts of *Poverty*, that ſpring
From diffring Roots: effects they likewiſe bring
Both diffring and alike: for, providence
Maugre all humane wit and diligence,
Makes many poor, and all their induſtries
Rendreth ſucceſſeleſs by *Contingencies*,
VVhich no man can fore-ſee, or wholly ſhun
VVho ſhall be thereby outwardly undone.
This *Poverty*, afflicts, at firſt, as much
As any, but, diſparages not ſuch
As bear it well; and though it grieveth many,
(Except by their own fault) deſtroyes not any.
The other ſort, is ſordid, vile, and baſe,
Yet, draws her *Pedigree*, from ſuch a Race,
As doth in *Country*, *City*, and in *Court*
Still bear an extraordinary port;
For, by the Fathers, or the Mothers ſide,
It ſprung from *Prodigality* or *Pride*,
Or, from *Improvidence* or *Idleneſs*,
And, is indeed, near kin to all *Exceſs*,
Though her *Alliance*, theſe, now ſcorn and wave,
Becauſe, that ſhe is ragged, and they brave.
She, at this preſent time, both againſt me
And others is employ'd: But, though ſhe be
Made uſe of by the *world*; yet, I well know
The *World it ſelf* abhors her as a foe,

And

And, with a ſlaviſh dreadfulneſs doth fear her,
On whatſoere occaſion, ſhee comes near her.
Yea, till this *Bug-bear*, was more known to mee,
I, dreaded her almoſt as much as ſhee,
And, did the beſt I could, to keep her from
That *nearneſs* whereunto ſhe now is come.
For, he that would diſgrace, and bring us to
That *State*, which queſtionleſs might us undo,
Let him but juſtly ſay that wee are *poor*,
And, to deſtroy us, hee need ſay no more.
VVhereas diſgrac'd thereby we ſhall be much
If, we continue to be very rich,
Of whatſoever crime or crimes, we ſtand
Convicted by the known *Laws*, of this Land.
For, *VVealth* cannot alone our *Pardons* buy
And blot out every former Infamy;
But, in a ſhort time alſo, make us capable
Of *Truſts* or *places* that be honourable;
Yea though they be thoſe *places* which diſpence
To all the people, *Law* and *Conſcience*;
And marry *Ladies* (neither nor poor, nor painted)
As if our bloods had with no crimes been tainted.
But, to be *poor*, implieth every whit,
As if we had nor *honeſty*, nor wit,
And, every thing, which ſince our lives begun,
VVee *honeſtly*, nor *prudently* have done,
Shall ſo traduced be as if that nought
Had e're by us, been *well done*, *ſpoke*, or *thought*.
There, where we have been kindly entertain'd,
A civil uſage, hardly ſhall be daign'd.
There, where we have been honour'd in times paſt,
Neighbours and *Kinſmen* will their doors make faſt;
Our old familiars will our perſons ſhun,
Like Rats, our Servants from the houſe will run,
Which, then, will be a place of deſolation,
And few thenceforth approach our habitation,

But,

But, *Serjeants*, *Shreeves*, or *Bayliffs* (beasts of prey)
That little, which is left, to fetch away:
And, when there doth remain nor sticks nor stones,
Dead or alive, they'l take our *Flesh* and *Bones*.
If all I should expresse, that might be said
In this kind, you would think mee still afraid
Of *Poverty*; and, that which I should speak,
In some, perhaps, would such impressions make
That, they with difficulty would beleeve
What benefits I now thereby receive:
Forbearing therefore, that which I might add
I'le tell what profits may thereby be had;
That, others (who can think I do not lye)
May be no more afraid thereof than I:
That, also, they who thereby grieved are,
May in my Consolations have a share,
To bear those burthens without discontent,
Which are now on them, or seem imminent:
For, little I will mention which was brought
By *reading*, or by *hearsay* to my thought;
But, that *Philosophy*, which *Reason* teaches,
(*Experience* hath confirm'd, and GOD's *Grace*
Unto my heart; that, it may sympathize (preaches)
With their hearts, who the same shall not despise:
Which, though expresst in language rude and plain,
Will, peradventure, to good use remain,
When they, who of their *Elegancies* boast,
Are, with their *Kickshaws*, in oblivion lost.
When most are also, quite forgot, whom they
Now dream, shall by their *Poems*, live for aye;
And, when, that, which they despicable deem,
With *wise*, and *honest men*, shall finde esteem.
In my *Restraint*, I therefore, do not whine;
At my *Reproaches*, I do not repine,
Nor murmure at my *losses*; nor want sense
Of what is in them, which may give offence.

My

My *ſeeming-friends*, I muſt confeſs, are fewer,
But, they whom now God gives mee are much truer;
For, theſe that now I have, I finde more willing
To *give* a pound, than thoſe to *pay* a ſhilling.
Yet, ſome of theſe are ſo poor, that, I'm fain
Them, from their free *Donations* to reſtrain,
Becauſe, that of my *Sufferings* they are grown
More ſenſible, than they are of their own.
And this, an *evidence* of that doth give,
VVhich pleaſeth better than what I *receive*;
Since it demonſtrates, GOD, hath in this *Nation*
A people, capable of his *compaſſion*.

I am not ignorant how much diſgrace
Is thrown on *Poverty*, nor in what baſe
Account they are, who, thereby are conſtrain'd
Meerly, by *Charity*, to bee maintain'd:
Yet nought aſhamed am of that eſtate
VVhich moſt ſo ſcorn, and ſo abominate.
For without loſs of *honour*, men of merit,
This *Portion* very many times inherit.
Great *Conſuls*, and renowned *Generals*
(In ſuch an exigent as oft befalls
To very many thouſands in this *Nation*)
Have had relief without diſ-reputation
By *Common Charity*: and, *Antient Story*
Hath kept memorials of it to their glory.
But, I refer that which I might expreſs
(To take this *Blur* off) to another place.

To have *ſubſiſtance* by meer *Charity*
Is, to ſubſiſt by GOD, immediately,
And, they are wicked, or, vain fools, at leaſt,
By whom thoſe *Exhibitions* are diſgrac't.
For, very many of GOD's favourites
Have been oft, thereby, from the worlds deſpights
Preſerv'd: yea, to the *World*, it would appear
If ſhee would heed it, that, her *Minions* are

Expoſ'd

Expos'd to such a *Lot*, and (without shame)
Have been by *Alms* preserved as I am:
And, not in those necessities alone,
VVhich by mis-accidents are undergone,
Are they reliev'd; but, very many be
Thereby likewise upheld, in that degree,
VVhich much is honour'd; yea, ev'n to Excesse,
In outward splendor, and vain pompousnesse.
For, this way, not alone are Monks and Friers
Maintained, with their Abbots and their Priors,
But, even the great *Prelates*, all their lives,
By *Charities* abused *Donatives*;
And, yet as loftily advance their crest
As if they had been Barons born, at least;
Precedency usurping above those,
By whom, they from obscurity arose.
By most men, *Poverty* is thought so base,
That, they repute it for the great'st disgrace
VVhich can betide them, by what way soever
It comes; or howsoere they shall indeavour
To keep it off, and think it not their least
Dishonour, when enforced to subsist
By *Charity*, although it shall be used
VVith thankfulness, and in no wise abused.
And, many seek to turn it to my shame
That I now brought to this condition am.
Yet, what's to mee befallen worse or more
Than to *good*, *wise*, and *great men* heretofore?
Renowned *Princes* in preceding ages,
Have sought, and had Supplies and Patronages,
From *Forein Kings* and *States*, in their distresses
VVithout reproach: yea, he that now possesses
These three great *Kingdomes* was by indigence
Constrained (not a very long time since)

By

By *Charity*; to be both cloath'd and fed;
To ſlake his hunger with a poor mans bread,
And, to accept it, not alone from thoſe
Who were his *friends*, but alſo from his *foes*,
(Whoſe gifts were baits, whoſe Table was a ſnare,
And, of whom, if hee do not well beware,
More miſchief, and, diſhonour will be done him
Than by the *Poverty* then brought upon him.)
Some other perſons alſo, of great birth, (earth
From place to place have wandr'd through the
Maintain'd by the Charity alone,
Sometime by many, and ſometimes by one;
And other while, have ſeem'd ſo left by all,
That they into great poverty did fall.
Yet n'eretheleſs, whilſt they have Preſervation
Retain ſtill in the world ſome Reputation.
They are meer fools, or worſe, who do beleeve
That, more diſgrace, than theſe I can receive
From ſuch an *In-come*: for (by what I gather
From thence) it is a *real honour* rather,
That, GOD ſupplieth (as it were) from Heaven,
When earthly *wealth* and *honours* are bereaven.
When *Iſrael* had been Captiv'd ſev'nty year,
Hee made, even thoſe, by whom inſlav'd they were
Them, from their tedious thraldome to redeem,
When there was none to help or pity them.
It was their honour, that their preſervation
Should be vouchſafed, ſo to admiration,
That *Nations* all, might in all times to come,
By heeding it, conſider well, from whom
They muſt in ſuch like caſes aid expect;
And, that, though by a long delay'd effect
They ſeem forgot, and outward hopes quite paſt,
There will bee a *Deliverer* at laſt,

By whom, thoſe wants for which they have been
Shall, to their honour, certainly be turn'd. (ſcorn'd
What is it more to my Diſ-reputation
That GOD provideth for my preſervation
By *Charity*, than 'tis diſgrace to thoſe
Who their Eſtates by *Fire* or *Water* loſe
And, thereupon the State vouchſafes a *Breef*,
Whereby to ask, and to receive releef?
Nay, what ſupply can be ſo honourable
As that, which from hearts, by hands charitable
Is raiſed and conferr'd, (unaskt, unſought)
By them, of whom I never heard, or thought?
This way (which without ſhame I do confeſs)
GOD hath vouchſaf'd releef in my diſtreſs,
To mee, as hee to men in like eſtate,
Hath done in former times, and now of late.
E're while at *Piedmont* in their perſecutions
Our Brethren hee reliev'd by contributions;
And, ſhould I think it my diſgrace can be
That, hee doth for my family and mee
Provide, as for a *Nation*? I beleeve
It blame deſerv'd, if ſo I ſhould conceive.
Though I had ask'd, what without asking came,
None could impute it juſtly to my blame
All things conſider'd: for, a *Publick Score*,
Demonſtrates, that this *Nation* owes mee more
Than Food and Rayment; and that, in the fine
My *Want*, will more be their diſgrace than mine.
My *beggarly condition*, is a Portion
More noble, than *Wealth* gotten by Extortion,
Bribes, projects, and thoſe cheats whereby ſome bee
Advanced to great wealth, and high degree,
Thought honourable: yea Benevolences,
And forced Loans, which otherwhile by Princes
Exacted

Exacted be, much more disgraceful are
Than what my *Benefactors* do confer;
For, at my need, it giveth mee releef,
And, to the *Givers*, is no wrong or grief.
I hear that is disgracefully objected
VVhich by my *Poverty* is now effected:
My house, they say, is desolate become,
And, I confin'd am to a single room;
My wife is of her Dowry quite despoi'd;
I cannot give the portion of a childe
To Son or Daughter, which a while ago
I offred, and was able to bestow:
And, that, where lately we had good respect
Scoffs, flouts and jeers, are added to neglect;
And, though these hardships possibly I may
VVith patience bear, yet, certainly, say they,
These his *Relations* cannot: yes, they can
And have done, ever since the storm began:
For, we fore-saw it, and we did prepare
A stock of Patience, those events to bear.
My *Sponse* is CHRIST's Spouse, by a *Law Divine*,
More his, than she by *Humane Law* is mine.
Our *Children* (though the world usurps a power
O're them) are likewise, much more his than our;
And, of her scorn, though she an Object makes them
He neither helpless leaves them, or forsakes them.
He made this *Globe*, with all that therein is;
All things that are in Heav'n and Earth are his;
VVe know it, and therefore do not despair
That here on Earth; our loss hee will repair,
Or, give us better *Portions*, where, they never
Shall be impair'd, but injoy'd for ever.
Yea, I am confident, that, if it may
But add unto GOD's glory any way,

Or, make for their Advancement in that path
VVhich, to *Eternity*, a tendance hath,
He'l either keep them *Virgins* to attend
The LAMB, when he brings *Babel* to an end,
Or, marry them ere long, without my coſt,
And, give them better *Portions* than they loſt,
Or, at the worſt, they ſhall content be made
VVith (be it more or leſs) what may be had.
This, without wavering, beleeve I do,
And, others will perhaps, beleeve it too,
VVhen they conſider Marriages in Heaven
By GOD himſelf are made, and Portions given,
In *Love* and *Vertue*, without prepoſſeſſing
Of any other *Medium*, but his bleſſing.
Wealth, in it ſelf, is neither good nor bad,
Nor *Poverty*, nor *takes from*, nor doth *add*
To *Happineſs Eſſential*, but, as they
Are ſanctifi'd, and as our games wee play:
And, of the two, in that, leaſt danger lies,
VVhich we moſt ſeek to ſhun, and moſt deſpiſe.
Wealth, makes men waſteful, diſſolute and lazy,
In manners rude, in *Mind* and *Body* crazy;
Makes *bold-men* cowards, *Free-men* doth inſlave;
Many, to loſe themſelves, their wealth to ſave.
It ſo befools them, that Aſſe-like, ſome bear
Their golden-load, till, meat for worms they are,
Enjoying no more profit by their Treaſure,
Save meerly, an imaginary pleaſure
VVhilſt here they live; and, as if hope it gave
It would be uſeful to them in the grave.
They hugg it, hoard it, and do lock it faſt,
(As long as living breath in them doth laſt)
Not ſenſible of any detriment
VVhich they do thereby cauſe, or might prevent.

And,

And, I beleeve, three Families, for one,
That thereby thrive, by *Riches* are undone,
Through those debauchments whereto they allure,
Till, soul or bodies ruine, they procure.
Contrariwise, despised *Poverty*,
Incites to courage, and to industry,
Breaks thraldoms Yoaks; cures often, those diseases
VVhich *Luxury* ingenders, or increases;
For, 'tis an Antidote against the *Gout*,
And helps to purge all those ill humours out,
That, send men to their graves, by an excess
Either in gluttony, or drunkenness.
Exorbitant desires it doth restrain,
An empty belly makes a witful brain:
A crosseless purse, to him small danger brings
VVho bears it; for, *before the Thief hee sings*.
And, when he dies, that which makes those men sad,
VVho, whilst they liv'd, things in abundance had,
Afflicts not him that's poor; for he's depriv'd
Of nought, but what oppress him whilst he liv'd.
A very poor man also, scapes their fates,
VVho are *belov'd*, or *hang'd* for their *Estates*,
And, some at this time, (*I beleeve*) will judge
The last of these, to be a *priviledge*.
Though many, not a little do rejoyce
In that rude, loud, and everlasting noise
VVhich, in most rich mens houses you shall hear,
VVhere every Room is made a *thorow-fare*;
Or, where, so many *servants* help to do
Their works, as make *one Buſ'ness*, more than *two*;
VVhere, for each man who faithfully obeyes him,
The Master feeds another, who betrayes him
And, thrice as many, who, by night or day
Do steal, perhaps, or spoil, or waste away

More (oftentimes) than would the charges bear
Of paying twice their wages, for that year:
Though many like this; 'tis to me an eaſe
That *Poverty* hath freed me quite from theſe.
I, now, finde much more joy, than in much pelf,
That, I have learned how to ſerve my ſelf;
To bruſh my Cloak, my garments to unlooſe,
Put on and off, my ſtockings and my ſhooes,
And, that, without my *Servants*, I can bee
As well content, as they are without mee;
I know both how to want, and to abound;
And much more pleaſure, I, in this have found,
Than in choyce meats, that in a time of need,
On bread alone, I ſavourly can feed,
Or; on as ſcanty, and as homely fare
(In my old age) as men that pooreſt are:
Yet, be both more in health, and no leſſe able,
Than when GOD gave a fully furniſh'd table,
With meat ſo well cook't, that it did invite
At every meal, a *double-Appetite*.
And, I, whoſe worſt apparel ul'd to be
As good as any mans of my degree,
Can in thoſe garments, without ſhame, appear
Which, I, but lately was aſham'd to wear;
Unto which confidence, till want had brought mee,
Philoſophy, that leſſon never taught mee.
I, muſt likewiſe, ingenuouſly confeſs
That, my diſtractions have been ten times leſs
Since I had nothing left; than whil'ſt I had
What, in opinion, mee a *rich man* made:
And, this is gain'd by loſing what is gone,
That, now, 'twixt having *Wealth*, and having *none*,
I know the difference to be ſo ſmall,
That, upon neither of them, dote I ſhall:

For,

For, as much *certainty*, I do perceive
In that *uncertainty*, at which I live
As is in any temporal estate
Of *Goods* or *Lands* (especially of late)
Now, therefore, I desire not to be *Rich*,
Or to be *Poor*, because (not knowing which
Will best advantage mee) I to his pleasure
Have left it, who, knows what *Estate*, and *Measure*
Of *Wealth* and *Poverty*, best fit mee shall
To do that, whereto hee vouchsafes a *Call*.
I neither *Wealth* nor *Poverty* will chuse;
Nor, which soere he gives will I refuse.
But, most men would have somewhat of their
As if supplies by *Charity* bestown, (own,
Would sooner fail them; yea, although their Father
Well cloaths and feeds them, they desire much ra-
To finger their whole *Portion*, that they might (ther
Pursue their own desires, out of his sight.
Some other, altogether do rely
On their own prudence, and self-industry,
And, of *Contingencies*, are so afraid
That, thus within themselves their hearts have said;
We possibly, into such wants may fall,
And, so deserted likewise be of all
By whom we have been harbour'd, cloath'd and fed,
(Some of them being ruin'd, and some dead)
That, unless wee can some *Reserve* provide,
Whereby, what e're haps, wee may be supply'd,
Wee may become exceeding miserable;
Especially, if us to dis-enable,
Old Age, *Restraint*, and Sickness should increase,
And, to *Necessities*, add *Helplesness*.
Should this befall (as possibly it may)
Our *Poverty* would be too great, they'l say,

VVith patience to be born: Alas! *poor men*,
I'le grant all this may happen: but, what then?
Did ever you yet know, or see, or hear,
That Lands or goods freed any from this fear?
If not, how can you hope to bring to pass
That, which by no man, yet effected was?
Have you not still a GOD? and, is not hee,
A Refuge, though all other failing be?
Your *Trust* was never plac'd on him alone,
If him, you cannot trust, when all is gone.
VVhile somewhat's left, whereby subsist we may,
As David said, wee boast of him all day,
But, bee assur'd, that e're from hence yee go,
Hee'l make proof, whether it be thus or no.
Him, and our *own Cause*, wee do much mistake,
VVhen 'tis at *best*, the same at *worst*, wee make,
And, so much on his *Gifts* our hearts are set,
That, him, who did bestow them, we forget.
To GOD, *be therefore*, *praise*, *who*, *by this trial*
Gives mee both *proof* and *means* of *Self-denial*.

I, am as worthless as the worst of you,
I, nothing know by mine own merits due,
But, that which now I suffer, and much worse,
(The wages of an everlasting curse)
My frailties are as great, my sins as many
As yours; worse than my self I know not any,
Though some so seem: and, yet, GOD's promises
Make way through all these disadvantages,
So well to know *him*, that I do beleeve
My trust in him, hee never will deceive;
And, that it would for my advantage be
If all that may be fear'd, should fall on mee.
VVere that *condition* (as it may bee) mine,
I, then, should have no more cause to repine

Than

Than any other man, who to the doom
Of *Death* submitteth, when his time is come:
For, he who feels this day nor want nor sorrow,
May be in worse estate than I to morrow.
So long, as I, have any *work* to do,
I shall have what is needfull thereunto.
And when 'tis at an end, no matter whether
The stroke of Death shall be received, either
By Axe or Halter, (so I merit not,
What is by Law the Malefactors Lot.)
Or, *starving*, or, by one of those diseases
Which, ordinarily, the body seizes. (breath
For, that shame, which men fear, whilst they have
By suffring, what they count a shameful death
Is shar'd among mankind, and every one
Bears part thereof with mee, when I am gone.
And, whilst I live, what e're can suffred be,
May fall as well to any, as to mee.
Upon my *death-bed*, or, upon a Rack,
When flesh and bones, and all my sinews crack,
I may be therewithall, as blithe and frolick,
As, when a *burning Feaver*, or, the *Collick*
Age, or *Consumptions*, or the *Pestilence*
Shall be the means to carry mee from hence.
The pains of these, are oftentimes as strong,
They do continue ev'ry whit, as long;
And, at a *Rich mans* door, a *Lazar* dies
Sometimes as easily, as he that lyes
Upon a bed of Down, and who till death
All necessaries in abundance hath.
This, being well observ'd, it may appear
That, we are fooled with false hope, or fear,
When we shall dream to be secured more
From all events, by being *rich*, than poor,

Or,

Or, that, there any ſtate on earth can be,
VVhich may not have the ſame *Cataſtrophe*.
VVhen GOD vouchſafes to make mens *Povertie*
To glorifie him, he doth ſend ſupplies,
Ev'n by unlikely means; and makes that nouriſh
VVhereby, they, who are fed with dainties periſh.
Them, on whom *Tyrants* no compaſſion have,
He, in the fiery furnaces can ſave;
When they are caſt into a Lions den,
He maketh beaſts more merciful than men.
He, (when to manifeſt his Power Divine
It pleaſeth him) turns *Water* into *Wine*
Which, at a poor mans wedding once was done
More to his honour, than when *Conduits* run
With Sack and Claret; which magnificence
Adds honour to the marriage of a *Prince*.
He, when men hungring after *Righteouſneſs*
Wait on him in a hungry *Wilderneſs*,
Feeds thouſands with a few loaves, and two fiſhes,
As full, as if they had ten thouſand diſhes.
The bottome of a *Barrel*, and a *Cruſe*
Shall Meal and Oyl ſufficiently produce,
To keep a family in time of *Dearth*,
Until he ſends a *Plenty* upon earth.
He, when the *Creditor*, for payment asks
(With rigor) doth fill many empty Casks,
Out of one pot of Oyle, until there be
A competence, to ſet the *Debter* free,
And, for his livelihood, in time to come.
Yea, by devourers, he doth nouriſh ſome:
For, daily, that *Elias* might be fed
The *Ravens* brought unto him fleſh and bread.
This hath been; and ſome things I can aver
Of this kind, in mine own particular.

Once,

Once, twice, nay, oftner I have been distrest
As, I now am; and three times at the least,
Have had repair vouchsafed mee by GOD,
In such an extraordinary mode,
That, many did admire, at my supply;
As very well they might; for, so did I.
And, when it seasonably may be shown,
The manner of it will perhaps be known.
At, this time, that, which many did suppose
Would mee, ere now, have ruin'd; on my foes
Hath cast a bridle, and will keep mee from
What they intend, until my hour is come;
And, peradventure, then, restrain them too,
From acting all, that they intend to do.
That, which both my *Estate* and *Reputation*
Should have destroyed, is my preservation
Another away; and an advantage brings,
In better and more profitable things.
For, *Slanders*, gain mee credit; that, doth glad mee
Which was intended to deject and sad mee;
That, which pursued, is, to make mee poor
Makes my wants less, and my contentments more.
And, as if GOD had purpos'd to bestow
A *sign* upon mee, plainly to fore-show
That, those Afflictions, and abhorred places,
Which add to others, *torments* and *disgraces*,
Should comfort mee, when *common comforts* fail,
NEWGATE, suppos'd an ignominious *Jaile*
To mee, hath (as it were a *Patroness*)
Contributed releef in my distress,
Perhaps, from some of them, whose pressures were
Either as great, or greater, than, mine are:
Which (as I am obliged) to GOD's praise
I do, and shall acknowledge all my daies

To

To be an action, which doth ſignifie
A greater *Mercy*, than that bare ſupply;
For, it informs, and well aſſureth mee
A *Priſon*, ſhall no dammage bring to mee,
And, that thoſe places, which, make many poor,
Will make mee richer than I was before.
Theſe things, I thus expreſs, that others may
Perſwaded be, I do not write or ſay
What I have read or heard, or whereof I
Have no more in mee, ſave the *Theory*;
And, knowing, this, which into words I ſpin
Flows forth from what is really, within,
And, by experience learn'd, it might effect
That operation which I do expect.

Moſt men, ſuppoſe them ſigns they are beloved
Of GOD, and all their waies by him approved,
(How negligent ſoe're of his commands)
When outward things do proſper in their hands.
They count them marks of his *eſpecial Grace*
If their Cows caſts not Calf; if he doth bleſs
Their Oxen; if their flocks of Sheep increaſe;
If none doth in their perſons them oppreſs;
If their new-purchaſ'd Titles be made good;
If, by their Trades and Rents, they to their *Brood*
May leave great Portions; if, they may at *Court*
Finde favour; and, if bleſſings of this ſort
Be multiply'd upon them, they ſuppoſe
God is their *Friend*, and foe unto their foes.
Indeed, theſe, bleſſings are; But ſigns to mee
Of GOD's eſpecial Grace, theſe, rather be;
That, when of Land and Goods I am bereſt,
And, no external comfort ſeemeth left,
I can depend on him, and be more glad,
In his love, than in all that e're I had:

That,

That, I am freely juſtifi'd by him
In that, for which the world doth mee condemn:
That, I perceive, he deigneth mee releef,
By that, which uſually augmenteth grief;
And, that, when moſt inrag'd oppreſſors are,
Of their diſpleaſure, I am leaſt in fear:
That, things which threaten troubles to prolong
(Till they are helpleſs) make my faith more ſtrong,
My fear as little, whilſt the *Fight* doth laſt,
As at the *Triumph*, when all danger's paſt;
And, that, their waies, who do moſt malice mee,
Neither the waies of GOD, or good men be.

Theſe things, are of GOD's *love* a truer ſign
Than an increaſe of Corn, of Oyl and Wine,
And, I do ſmile to think, how like *poor ſlaves*
They will e're long, ſneak down into their graves,
Who, make falſe boaſt of GOD, when they with
Shall know, that, by their ſpight I better'd am. (ſhame
And, when my *Country* hears the next Age tell
How, mee they uſ'd, who alwaies lov'd it well;
What, better men have ſuffer'd; what, in vain
Was *ſaid*; what *done*, *undone*, and *done again*;
How, *Truth's* bely'd; how *Lies* upheld for *Truth*;
How much the *heart* diſſented from the *mouth*;
Their *Deeds* from what they ſeem to think and ſay;
And, how, at *faſt* and *looſe*, we now do play;
It will be thought, perhaps, this *Generation*
Had loſt *Faith*, *Reaſon*, *Juſtice*, and *Compaſſion*,
And, they, who ſhall by ſtrict examination,
Search out the cauſe of this prevarication
Will finde an hypocritical Devotion
Sprung from the love of *Riches* and *Promotion*,
(Diſ-robing Piety of her plain *Dreſſe*,
To be diſ-figur'd with that pompouſneſs

Which

Which is affected by the *Man of Sin*)
Of all that is amiſs, chief cauſe hath been.
I muſt not ſcribble all that might be pend
Upon this *Subject*, leſt I more offend
Than profit, or, leſt, for want of ſpeed,
Be hindred, in my purpoſe to proceed.
But, one more *Argument*, I'le therefore add
Whereby, it out of queſtion may be made,
That, to be very *Rich*, indangers more
A *real Happineſs*, than to be *poor*;
And, prov'd it ſhall be by a *Demonſtration*,
That, will admit no future confutation.
Becauſe, it ſhews that *Wealth* hath not alone
More hurt to many ſingle perſons done
Than *Poverty*, but, alſo to the Race
Of all *mankind*; and unto GOD's *Free-Grace*
Injurious been; diſhonour brought to CHRIST,
And, ſet up his oppoſers Intereſt.
Obſerve it, for, I, nothing will alledge
But, that, whereof, the meaneſt wit may judge.
I need not tell you, wee more eaſily
May drive a *Camel* through a needles eye,
Or, thread it with a *Cable*, than, to heaven
Rich men aſcend, or thither may be driven.
For, moſt have heard, he ſpake to that effect
Whoſe judgement none have reaſon to ſuſpect;
Yet, I will ſhew to you what way he went,
And how, by his example to prevent
That difficulty; For, he did not ſay,
One thing to us, and walk another way
As many do, and did, who would be thought
To follow him, and teach us what he taught.
In plain expreſſion I will let you ſee
Who, thoſe *Impoſtors* and *Apoſtates* be

Who

Who ſpeak ſometimes his *words*, and do profeſs
His *Truth*, yet are in practice nothing leſs.
CHRIST, knowing well, that, *Avarice*, *Ambition*,
Wealth and *Preferments* ripen to perdition,
And, that, they ſo inſenſibly deprave
The beſt and wiſeſt men, it way they give
To their Allurements; that, although he were
The Son of GOD, and needed not to fear
The frailties of his fleſh, he, to the Law
Conformed, and preſerved it in awe
By true obedience; mortifi'd that nature
Which he aſſumed from the *Humane-creature*,
Both by an unconſtrain'd *Humility*,
And, by a *voluntary Poverty*:
And, did for our example, and our ſake
Forbear, of things indifferent to partake,
Leſt, we, who know not how aright to uſe
Our *Liberty*, things lawful might abuſe
By taking that for *food*, which was provided
For Phyſick rather, when a *Cure* we needed.
When, firſt, from Heav'n he came (though Lord of all
In Heav'n and Earth he was) within a *ſtall*
He took up his firſt *Lodging*; paſſed on
Throughout his *Childe-hood*, as he had begun;
And, to the world, no better did appear
Than Son to *Joſeph*, a poor Carpenter.
When to mans age he came (for ought we know)
He liv'd by labour, as ſuch poor men do.
And, when he did begin to manifeſt
Himſelf to be *the Saviour* JESUS CHRIST,
His Royalty was furniſh'd out no more
With *Earthly Riches*, than it was before;
He had nor Lands, nor Goods, to finde him bread,
Nor any Houſe, wherein to reſt his head.

He

He had, for what was needful, no ſupplies
But, pious men and womens Charities.
Poor deſpicable *Fiſher-men* (or ſuch)
And, thoſe, who neither Noble were, nor Rich
He choſe for his *Diſciples*; and when theſe
He ſent abroad on his Ambaſſages,
They were forbidden either to take care
Wherewith they might be fed, or what to wear,
Or, mony to provide for their expence,
But, leave thoſe things unto GOD's providence.
To them his Goſpel-principles he gave,
And, taught them how themſelves they ſhould be-
In their *Diſcipleſhip*, both where neglect (have
They found, and alſo where they had reſpect.
He them injoyned, to be meek and humble,
And, as the likeli'ſt block to make them ſtumble
Warn'd, to *Precedency*, not to aſpire,
Or any *Lordly Attributes* deſire:
For, his *Diſciples* in their low'ſt condition
Began to be infected with *Ambition*.
The Sons of *Zebede*, when they were poor,
Were tainted therewithall; And, how much more
It doth deprave men when they wealthy grow
CHRIST did fore-ſee, and we have liv'd to know
By that, wherein the *Prelacy* hath varied
From his Example; and, by him who carried
The *Bag* in his time, we have learned too,
What *Avarice* may make a *Biſhop* do.
Moreover, when by publick Acclamation
CHRIST had a viſible inauguration
Into that *Kingdome*, whereto he was born,
No rich or Royal Robes by him were worn;
Nor ſought he to be honour'd with ſuch things
As are affected by terreſtrial Kings,

Bur,

But, meekly, through *Jerusalem* did pass
Not on a barbed Steed, but, on an Asse,
(Which none had backe before) & which not Pad,
Nor saddle, trappings, or a foot-cloth had,
Save what the people on his back had thrown,
And, to that purpose taken from their own.
When he was crown'd, no golden *Crown* he wore
Lin'd with soft Fur, but, one much worse than poor:
A *Wreath of Thorns*, he wore upon his head;
He had no better *Scepter* than a *Reed*;
A Purple Robe, was cast on him in scorn,
To be at that sad *Coronation* worn.
For him, there was prepar'd no other *Throne*,
Except a *Crosse*, to be advanc'd upon.
Not *Fun'ral Rites*, nor *Monument*, nor *Grave*,
Had he when dead, but, what some lent or gave.
Thus, poorly was his *Kingdome* here begun;
Thus, his *Affairs of State* were carried on.
So long, as he a life on earth retain'd,
Like no terrestriall *Monarch*, here he reign'd;
But, glorify'd his *Kingdom* in this mode:
And, when that he ascended up to GOD,
Hee, by his *Holy Spirit*, so did minde,
(And so inspire those whom he left behinde)
To propagate the same, that they pursu'd
The Discipline and *Patterne*, which he shew'd.
From SATANS *Kingdoms*, to distinguish it,
He added whatsoever did befit
A Righteous *Government*, in every thing
Which might advance the Throne of such a King,
Without those *Bawbles* which do more oppress
Their *Subjects*, than promote the *Common Peace*.
To this end, and preserve with purity
The *Church* and *Saints* in their integrity,

They left behinde them precepts, counsels, cautions,
And, many (not ambiguous) declarations,
Both to inform us of the mind of CHRIST,
And, of the wiles of that great *Antichrist*
Which was to come, and should foundations lay
To set a *Kingdome* up, *another way*;
That, might (if possible) be thought to be
CHRIST's *Kingdome*, as now thousands live to see
The world reputes what they erected have,
And, with her Ornaments, made rich and brave.
Moreover, that CHRIST's *Vineyard* and *Cornfield*,
Might fruits both nourishing and pleasant yeeld,
No needful diligence, at first was wanting,
In digging, dressing, sowing, or in planting;
Or, so to beautifie it, that none might
Despise it, or not therein take delight.
And, that, none should by Pride, or Avarice
Intrude upon their *Brethrens* Legacies,
They, truly, his *Last Tstament* recorded;
The same into a *Gospel-Law* they worded,
Which hath sufficiency, without additions
By *humane policies*, or new Traditions,
To constitute his *Kingdome*, and prevent
Prevarications, by mis-government.
To bar out *Innovations*, they by *Deed*
Confirmed, what they had in *words* decreed.
From no true principles of Faith they swerved,
Devotions reverence they well preserved,
With ut new-fangles, and those trincketings,
That *Superstition* to adorn it brings.
The *Sacrament* (by which the death of *Christ*
Should be remembred) they made not the *Test*
Of things, no way relating to that end,
For which, that *Mystery* he did intend,

Or,

Or, rendring, what ſhould be by his intention,
The *Band of Love*, a means to breed *diſſention*:
Nor was the *Bread* or *Wine* then Idoliz'd;
But, that *Love-feaſt*, was duly ſolemniz'd,
In decency, without vain pomp of State;
Altars, Court-cubbord like, beſet with *Plate*;
Waxe-lights at noon, in *Silver-Candleſticks*,
Or, any other of thoſe needleſs tricks,
Which were firſt introduced, in thoſe daies
When *Wooden-Prieſts*, got ſilver *Chalices*.
They uſ'd no ſuperſtitious Adorations,
Cringings, ridiculous geſticulations,
Or mimick Actions: not theſe, or thoſe, *poſtures*
Of *Body*; neither *places*, *times*, or *veſtures*,
Were ſo eſſential made, or neceſſary
To *holy Duties*, that, none ought to vary
From thoſe *Formalities*: nor, *painted walls*;
Nor *Pictures* had they, *Surplices*, nor *Palls*,
Chimers, *hoods*, *Rochets*, nor rich *Copes*, nor *Tippets*;
Nor was their *Service* cut out into ſippets,
For, ſuch toyes (then unknown) did not begin
Till *Anichriſt* aroſe and brought them in;
And, till with *Wealth* and *Dignities* inricht
The *Presbyters*, and *Biſhops* were bewitcht.
To have prevented this (as I have ſaid)
A good *Foundation* CHRIST himſelf had laid;
And, at the firſt, that *Structure* was begun,
Which, he intended ſhould be built thereon.
Such as were then, by ſacred Ordination,
Call'd *Biſhops*, watchful were, and took occaſion
From ev'ry ſlip, to travel, preach, and write,
That, errours and miſ-deeds prevent they might.
As ſoon as *Demas* and *Diotrephes*,
With ſuch like, were obſerved in their daies

To innovate, and labour to begin
That *Prelacy* which, afterward crept in,
They so oppos'd it, that, till from his chain,
The Devil (then confin'd) was loos'd again,
None could set up what a faction begun,
Though many were then working thereupon;
For, CHRIST's *Apostles*, and their true successors
(In spight of *Innovators*, of *Oppressors*
And *Heretick*s) by that simplicity
Of *Truth*, which was profest in *Poverty*,
Did so distinguish it, from what by those
Advanc'd would be, when *Antichrist* arose,
That, they inviolate maintaind thereby
Her honour, and her native purity,
Without that carnal Pomp, and costly Pride
With wch the TRUMPET now seems glorifi'd:
And wherewith, shee hath halt the worle inchanted,
Since *Heathenish Deities*, were first supplanted.
That *Miracle*, was wrought by GOD, through
Whose *Poverty* the world did then contemn: (them
Ev'n when their *Worshippers* were in full power,
And, when inrag'd at height, sought to devour
Their scorn'd *Oppos*ers, they withall that odds
Were not then able to support their Gods.
But, when the *Saints* were as distrest and poor,
As they, who seek their bread from door to door,
When, they broke through a tenfold *persecution*,
To put their *Masters* will in execution;
When in despised habits through each *Nation*
They preach'd the blessed means of our salvation;
Were counted *Fools*, and as much dis-esteem'd
As any, who are now *Phanaticks* deem'd;
When, they had neither *Academick Halls*,
Schools, *Colledges*, or sumptuous *Cathedrals*,

Nor

Nor *Universities*, nor *Deans*, nor *Doctors*,
Prebends, *Archdeacons*, *Chancellours* or *Proctors*,
Nor *Rents*, nor *Tithes*, nor *Pensions*, nor *Oblations*,
Excepting onely good mens *free-donations*;
When they, nor *Bishops* had, nor *Presbyters*,
Save such as *holy Scripture* characters,
(Who claimed no *Precedence*, or *Submission*,
From those, authoriz'd by the same *Commission*;
When they were meek and lowly, in their places,
Poor in their *Temporalities*, and rich in *Graces*;
When, they (as necessary to salvation)
On no man did impose an Observation
Of *dates*, *times*, *forms*, or *Ceremonious Rite*,
But, as to edifying, tend it might;
And, left them to be practis'd, or omitted,
As, either they might, or might not be fitted
To *holy Duties*, without just offences,
To other mens, or their own consciences;
(In which *case*, none that hath Sobriety,
Will bar another of his *Liberty*.)
When *Pastors* medled not at all, or little,
With *Soveraigns*, whether *they themselves*, or *Title*
Were *good* or *bad*; excepting in those cases
Which did concern the duties of their places;
But, in the fear of GOD, obedient were
To that *Power*, which did visibly appear
Impowered to protect them (whilst it stood
With that obedience, which they owe to GOD;
And, did by suffring, render satisfaction,
For what they dared not perform in action.)
When, *Emperours* not *Kings* did them esteem,
Not *flatter'd* were, or *fawn'd* upon by them;
Ev'n then by these, mens *Doctrines* and *Examples*,
Were all the *Gentiles* great and glorious *Temples*

Throughout the world destroy'd: their *Superstitious*
(From which *New Rome* retrived her *Traditions*)
Were then by those expell'd: Their *Oracles*,
Then silenc'd were; Their jugling *Miracles*
Were prov'd *Impostures*: Then, the *Sophistries*
Of those whom former ages thought most wise,
Were found but fallacies; their *wisdome* folly;
Unsound their *Manners*, their *belief* unholy;
Their books of *Curious Arts*, whereby great fame
They had acquir'd, were cast into the flame;
And, then, their *Flamins*, and *Archflamins* too,
(Who domineered as the Prelates do)
Were (as these, in the time appointed shall)
Brought to those *dooms*, which on *Impostors* fall.
The *Worship* also, wherewithall the *Jews*,
The *worlds* credulity sought to abuse,
As well as her *Philosophy*, was foil'd
At their own *weapons*; of that glory spoil'd
Whereof they boasted; and all this was done,
Without the *Outward Pomp*, now doted on.
And, if the *Prelates*, can with all the glory,
Which they have gotten by things Transitory,
And, by the help of all the Kings on earth,
To such another *Miracle* give birth,
Ile think, that they as great Impostors are,
As *Jannes*, and as *Jambres* long since, were;
Yet, still beleeve, that, maugre all their power,
The *Rods* of these, will their *charm'd Rods* devour.
That, which the *Prelates* take to be a *sign*
Of *Sanctity*, the most becoming *shrine*
Of sacred *Piety*, and true *Devotion*,
I mean, that *Pomp*, whereby (for self promotion)
They seek to trim and paint it, forth hath brought
(Compar'd to this) not any thing worth ought

But

But meer contempt: for, by the zeal of those,
Who, made such poor, and despicable shows,
More honour to the *Church* of *Christ* is done,
Than all their *wealth* and *honours*, have thereon
Conferr'd, in more than fifteen hundred years,
By all their great and potent *Favourers*.
They, whom the *Churches Pastors* brought forth,
Though *poor externally*, had *inward worth*.
Good life was practis'd, sacred *Truth* profest
Religion, with sincerity imbrac'd,
In her poor *Dress*, by many an *humble Saint*,
Without the fucus of a *Whorish paint*;
And, till men leaving their plain sober way,
Sought by external *wealth*, to make her gay,
The *Church*, in Piety, did still increase
Though outward *persecutions* did not cease.
But, what hath followed since her *Poverties*,
Are chang'd for temporal *wealth* and *dignities*?
Since *Princely Prelates* sought for carnal things,
Had learn'd to flatter *Emperours* and *Kings*,
And, cheat them with a *seeming Loyalty*,
Made credible by *fained Piety*?
Since they, an *Ambodexters* part could play,
Had got *two Masters*, and a *double pay*,
Topt *wreathes Imperial* with a *Triple crown*,
Made *Rebels* Martyrs, trod *Allegiance* down
And, had on so much *wealth* and *honour* ceat'd,
That they could turn the *scale* wch way they pleas'd,
What, hath e're since that time, proceeded thence
But, products of Destructive consequence?
And those *Confusions*, for which (without shame)
Some, to the *Saints* of GOD, impute the blame,
As heretofore, the *Heathen Tyrants* did
To them, whose blood they innocently shed?

And, though that, in their *publick declamations*,
(As also, in their private exultations)
The *Psalmes*, to a joy transported seem,
Like, (as they say themselves) men in a dream,
To see that *Wealth*, and *Pomp* restor'd again,
Whereof, (small hope they did erewhile retain;
Though, of a golden *Hierarchie* dreaming,
They (still the *Penents* of CHRIST blaspheming)
Do think, the *Angels* are as glad as they
Of that, wherein they triumph at this day;
And, (ay (which I conceive to be a lye)
That, they, could well content have been to dye,
The next day after they restor'd had been
To that condition, which they now are in;
Yet, I beleeve, it will not, in the close,
Make them so happy, as they now suppose;
Or, give much cause unto this *Generation*,
To be well pleased in their restauration.

For, to these *Nations*, or unto our *King*,
What, can I think, these *golden Calves* will bring
Save, at the last, what followed upon that,
Which *Jeroboams* policy of State
Produc'd in *Isr'el*, when he (as it were
In spight of GOD) set *golden Calves* up there?
And, his *Successors* walkt on in that way;
VVhat er'e those *Prophets*, from thenceforth, could (say
VVhom GOD, in *Justice*, or in *Mercy*, sent
Their threatned *desolation* to prevent?
VVhat, is more likely, if th' *abominations*
Of, almost ev'ry Good-man, in these *Nations*
Shall be indulg'd? (and, though it ever since
It first begun, produc'd nought but offence?)
For, *Observation* daily finds it plain,
That, *fear of losses*, or the *hope of gain*,

Or,

Or, of *Promotion*, will root out apace
The seeds and plants, of *Piety* and *Grace*.
And, since, already, it so multiplies
Apostates, and augments *Hypocrisies*,
What can be thought, but, that, those daies, we see
Wherein, th' *Elect* shall hardly saved be,
Unless GOD shorten them? for, whatsoere
Men *say*, or *do*, they fall into a *snare*;
And, those *Deceivers*, whereof last I spoke,
To blinde mens eyes, have raised such a smoak,
That, few, know which way safely turn they may;
Or, what to *think*, *believe*, *hope*, *do*, or *say*.
Such *Histories*, as are approv'd by those,
Who never did the *Prelacy* oppose,
Affirm, that when the *Churches* Augmentation
Of *wealth* and *honour*, by the free donation
Of *Constantine*, was first on them conferr'd,
A *voice*, was in the Air distinctly heard,
Which did these words, articulately say,
Into the Church is poison pour'd this day:
And, thereupon, that, quickly did ensue,
Which, manifests the *Saying* to be true:
For, they, who read Historical Relations,
Of what hath been in former Generations,
(As also, in their times) discreetly heeding
What, their *Experience* addeth to their *reading*,
Will finde, that, here, and, almost ev'ry where,
The *Prelates* cause of many mischieves were.
Yea, that the greatest troubles on the earth,
Sprung indirectly, or directly, forth
From their *Ambition*, *Avarice* and *Pride*,
When *Gold* and *Silver* they had multipli'd.
How many troubles, have been here of late,
Occasion'd by what they did innovate?

How

How many thousand *Families* undone
In these three *Kingdomes* are, since they begun,
Those *whimzies*, which the prime occasion were
Of all the *Civil Wars* and discords here?
And, what more will ensue, GOD only knows,
For, wee, already see ill boding shows.
Their *Avarice*, and matchless greedinesse,
Of hoarding Treasure up, to an excess
At such a time as this, wherein the *State*
Is straitned; (and when much it doth abate
That, *Trading*, whereby, our necessities
Publick, and Private, should have their supplies)
Produceth ill effects; and how by these
Both in their *Civil Peace*, and *Consciences*,
Men may disturbed be, there's cause of fear,
By what in their *deportments* doth appear.
And, I observ'd this (which He now record)
That, when they first begun to be restor'd,
With them, return'd, (God grant there come no
May-poles, *Maid-marian*, & the *hobby-horse*, (worse)
Beside, some other heathenish *Prophanations*,
Maugre the *Kings* late pious Proclamations.
It would fill many volumes to collect
What *Prelacy* did heretofore effect;
How troublesome in other *Common-weals*,
And *Kingdomes*, it hath to GOD's *Israels*,
And; other people been: how oft have they
Endeavoured their *Soveraigns* to betray,
Unto the See of *Rome*? how oft, to bring
The *People* into bondage to their *King*,
That, when their purpose they had wrought on him
Both *King* and *people*, might be slaves to them?
How insolent and impudent a power,
Was then usurped when an *Emperour*

Did

Did hold the Stirrup? when an Engliſh king
They to ſo great a ſlavery did bring,
(And foolery to boot) as to decline
His *Royal Perſon*, at *Tom Beckets* ſhrine?
Do pennance there, and be ſo much befoold,
That, ſchool-boy-like, he was with Rods there
By *Canterbury* Monks? when, he, that trod (ſchool'd,
Upon his *Leige Lords neck* (blaſpheming GOD)
That piece of ſcripture, to himſelf applide
Which could in none, but CHRIST, be verifide?
Intolerable was his arrogance,
But, ſuch are oft effects of their advance;
And, thus, have *Kings* and *Emperors* been rewarded,
Who, their lean Gammons, had with fat inlarded.
These, are the bleſſed and the holy fruits,
Of their great *wealth*, and *Lordly Attributes*;
Yet, theſe are not the worſt; for *Kings* and *Princes*,
Were not alone by *Prelates* inſolencies,
Abuſ'd like other men, in what relates
Unto their lives, their honours and eſtates;
But, GOD, is alſo, thruſt out of his *Throne*:
Ev'n his *Peculiars* are uſurp'd upon;
And, ſuch Intruſions are now made, by theſe
Upon mens *Faiths*, and on their *Conſciences*,
That, they make many *Proſlites* for the *Devil*,
Expoſe them to an everlaſting evil,
And, cauſes are of miſchiefs and offence,
Which all the world can never recompence:
For, *Bonds* they lay, where GOD doth none impoſe;
Unbinde, from what he never will *unloſe*;
And, whatſoere he ſpeaks, his *words*, by theſe,
Are made to mean, what ever they ſhall pleaſe.
But, let the *Saints* in patience perſevere;
For, though theſe arrogantly domineer,

And,

And in their hopes grow every day more strong,
Their time of standing, will not now be long:
The Kings, who with the *Cup of Fornications*
Have been made *Drunk*, for many Generations,
Will at the last grow *sober*, or else *mad*,
To see what power on them, these *Juglers* had;
And, help to bring that fatal *Judgement* on,
Which must reward them for what they have done.
Great *Babylon* it self, will shortly fall,
And, they shall have their *Portion* therewithall.
To do us harm, they had not been so able,
If in those *Principles*, men had been stable
Which constitute CHRIST's *Church*; nor to assist
As they have done, the Throne of Antichrist,
Had these been still content to seek no more
(As *Bishops* were in ages heretofore)
Than might supply things needful in their place,
For *Nature* to promote the works of *Grace*,
(Nor stretched their *Precedency* ought further,
Than did conduce to *Decency*, and *Order*)
It had not such ill consequents produc'd:
And, could they but, yet, timely be reduc'd,
To that *Bound*, *Discords*, would ere long be ended,
And, much, that is amiss would be amended.
(GOD *Bless the* King, *and open so his eyes*,
That, he may see in what his safetie lies;
And prosper mee, as I desire hee may
Walke and continue, in that blessed way,
Which truly to his glory doth redound;
Whom he so kind, and merciful hath found.
My prayers are, that GOD would make him strong
Against the Charms *of every glosing Tongue;*
In Grace *and* Vertues, *daily so improve him,*
That, GOD *and* Men, *for ever more may love him:*

And,

And, that, I may finde favour in his sight,
According as I am in heart, upright:
For, whatsoever, hee shall have to mee,
To him, I'm true, and so will ever bee.
GOD, pardon all that I have done amiss,
And, so, I finish this *Parenthesis*.

Here, I have shown you, by plain *demonstration*,
Which (as I said) admits no confutation,
That, *Poverty* (though much despis'd) is better
Than *Riches*; and, that, I thereto am debter
Much more, for what concerns my happinesse,
Than, by what can be got by an excesse
In *Wealth* and *Honour*: And, what's here rehearst,
Will bee approv'd, when *Synods* have reversd
Their *Votes*; and be by *Welsh men* upheld
When *Acts of Parliament* shall be repeal'd,
That, were confirm'd, by *Common*, *Lords* & *King*,
When, GOD, shall to effect, his purpose bring,
And, those men to their *wits*, who little heeded,
What, would ensue that, wherein they proceeded,
Now I have done. If this you can believe,
And, GOD, his blessing thereunto shall give,
I have what, I desired for my paine,
And, what's here *writ*, shall not be writ in vaine:
for, all that's in my *words*, is in my *heart*,
In every circumstance, and every part.
Perhaps, this despicable *Barly-cake*,
May tumble, till a fatal breach it make
Into the Tents of *Midian*: but, thereon
What ere else follows, let GOD's will be done.
Though no man living, should the same regard,
A *good work*, to it self gives full reward,
And, there is nothing, that can make it less,
Than what it is, or, bar it from increase:

For,

For, though such *Accidents*, may oft befall,
As, that, it will not so appear to all,
Not *Poverty*, *Imprisonment*, *Disgrace*,
Life, *death*, *good*, *bad condition*, *time* nor *place*,
Praises, *Privations*, nor ought that hath name,
Makes *real Vertue*, not to be the same.
Glory be to GOD.

A Word *on the behalf of Mr.* Zachary Crofton *Prisoner in the Tower.*

Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye the same unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets, Matth. 7. 12.

SInce all men erre, and one way, or another,
Occasion what mis-happens to each other,
I cannot but be sensible of that,
Which may bee mine, and ev'ry mans estate.
CROFTON's a Prisoner, and, some say, must dye;
Yet, I, from none, can learn the reason why.
If his declaring for the COVENANT,
Be all his *Crime*, a reason I shall want,
To satisfie mee, by what *Law* wee shall
Conclude that his *Offence* is Capital;
Or, how, that can imputed be for *sin*,
Which, by no *Law*, hath yet forbidden been.
GOD, bless the *King* and *State*; and so mens reason
Preserve, that, we may once know *Truth* from *Treason*,
Lest we at last be brought into a snare,
And, be uncertain, when we Traitors are:
For, though it safely might bee justifi'd
That, rather than GOD, *Men* should be obey'd;
Such, may not be their own *Friends*, who condemn
That man, who pleaded both for GOD, and *them*,
And, to the hazzard of his life persists,
In vindicating their Joynt-Interests,
To no mans disadvantage, except those,
Who, are to GOD and *Men*, apparent foes.
Mee thinks, it is great pity, that, a man
Who, to GOD, *King* and *Church*, both may, and can
Be serviceable; and, who doth profess
His *Judgement*, in meer conscientiousness

Without

Without design'd contempt, unto the *State*,
Or, purposing a mutinous debate,
And, never gave just cause to be suspected,
He was to either of them disaffected,
(But, unto both of them, good service did,
When they of *Faithful Servants* had most need;
And, hath but done his duty, to oppose
Those *Harpies*, which to all *Good men* are foes)
Should by mistake, or, by mis-information,
As one, who had deserved no compassion,
A *Sufferer* with *Malefactors* be
Because, hee sees not, what he cannot see;
Or, else, because he cannot credit give
To what, he findes no reason to believe;
For, who will care for life, where *Prelacy*
Attains to such a height of *Tyranny*,
That, it inslaves both *Soul* and *Body* too?
And, where, of what we should *believe* and *do*,
No certainty, can by their LIGHT be known,
Nor leave obtain'd, to make use of our own,
Though voluntarily the King ingag'd
To let the *Conscience* be so priviledg'd;
And, *Mercy*, in some other things, did show
Whereof, the *Prelacy* will not allow.
Whether the COVENANT, by *right*, or *wrong*,
Were *made*, or *burnt*, it doth not now belong
To private men to question: For, when dooms
Are past in *Parliament*, the *Case* then comes
Before GOD's *Judgement-Seat*; and, woe to them,
Who, that, which hee approves of, shall condemn.
Till, therefore, he, thence answers their *appeal*
Wise men, their private thinkings will conceal.
And, him implore, to whom refer'd it is,
To *right* what's wrong, and pardon what's amiss.
What, *Fame* reports by *Crofton* to be done
I, singly and sincerely musing on,
Do finde, by that; whereof inform'd I am,
That, hee more merited *reward* than *blame*,
Unless, that, wherein other men have err'd
(Without his fault) may be to him transferr'd.
The *Covenant* hee took, but did not *make* it;
Nor forced any one to *take*, or break it;

But,

But, in his place alone, the same maintain'd
(To his own hazzard) as it appertain'd
Unto the *honour*, *peace*, and *preservation*
Both of the *Royal persons*, and the *Nation*,
As he thought it oblig'd; and as it stood
In force, relating to the *will* of GOD
And, no jot further; unless, wee suppose
Hee err'd, in pressing it, to bar our foes
Who, *have been*, still *are*, and *will be* ageñ,
Foes unto GOD, to *Kings*, and *Common weal*,
As soon as they themselves enabled finde,
To do the *work*, for which they were design'd.
For, that, which CROFTON most insisted on,
(As purpos'd by the *Covenant* to be done)
Is an exploding of the *Hierarchy*
Brought in, by *Antichristian-Prelacy*,
(To whose support, his *Oath* cannot extend
Who, CHRIST's *Faith*, is obliged to defend.)
And, if that, be a fault, GOD, mee forgive,
For, therein, I resolve, to dye, and live.

The *stress* of his *Case*, as appears to mee,
Lies there; if, hee of ought else guilty bee,
I, leave him to excuse himself; for, never
Saw I his face, nor shall perhaps for ever.
But, hee's in durance, and I fain would do
As, in his *Case*, I would bee done unto;
And, peradventure, it will needful bee
That, some, ere long, should do as much for mee.
There are, besides those sittings, which do fall
Within the duties of our *Common-call*,
Some, having so peculiar Relation,
To GOD's *Designments* in our *Generation*,
That, they not onely do the force abate
Of what is call'd, *The Reason of the State*,
But, of those *Precepts* also, at sometimes,
Who'se violations are most *heinous Crimes*
In any other case; as may appear,
By many proofs, which I will now forbear.
GOD, doth a *Generation-work* design;
For, ev'ry man: These, are a part of mine,
And, I had rather dye *ten deaths* for one
Than take *ten lives*, to let it bee undone.
Till that is done, mee, Lord watchsafe to keep;
And, David-like, then, let mee fall asleep. Act. 13. 36.